TRANSITIONAL LIVING PROGRAM FOR MARGINALIZED GHANAIAN
YOUNG ADULTS (18-22 YEARS) IN THE DIASPORA

By

EBENEZER CHRISTIAN ANNOR

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Abstract

TRANSITIONAL LIVING PROGRAM FOR MARGINALIZED GHANAIAN
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This dissertation addresses the best way to systematically prevent risky behavior of marginalized Ghanaian young adults (18-22 years) and provides the necessary tools of information through a program intervention model to help young adults achieve their full potential. The study examined the process and implications of their marginalization and explored the potential for implementing a transitional living program for Ghanaian young adults (18-22 years) by Prayer Watch Temple Ministries Int'l Inc., Bronx, New York. Interviews, questionnaires, fieldwork, and face-to-face interactions were found to be effective strategies of findings in assessing the level of marginalization. From the results of the study, it was felt that the logic models and measurable outcomes will provide opportunities and supports that will help young adults gain the competencies and knowledge needed to make a successful, as well as productive transition to self-sufficient living.

This project, through its Model for New Wave Care and curriculum design program, will contribute not only to the overall transformation of delinquent behavior of young adults, but educate the Ghanaian immigrant community and the church on how desired outcomes for transition to adulthood programs could reclaim our lost heritage and preserve a future generation for a lasting legacy.

To my loving and beautiful wife, Mrs. Janet Asantewaa Annor, for your gentle spirit, unlimited love, unflinching support, and encouragement in my life, ministry, and educational pursuit. God richly bless you! May you live long to experience God's abundant favor, grace, and prosperity, forever and ever—Love You! Amen.

Preface

This study began as an assessment of risky behaviors that mitigate against young adults' future aspirations and to determine interacting factors that influence their life stages. In response to a growing concern for youth dislocation, the research began with three years of interacting with young adults of varied backgrounds to understand their neglect, although is also part of a process to a Doctorate in Ministry. Through my passion for young adults' transformation, I was given the opportunity to conduct an in-depth study of how transition to productive adulthood could offer basic life-skills building. The scope of the study was contextual enough to warrant a community experiment research program to help ease a youth exodus from the church and provide educational opportunities and career counseling, as well as a model of a youth development program that sets forth the needs, resources, and services to help young adults develop the skills necessary to become independent. Working in collaboration with my site team, various groups of youth participants, the Ghanaian immigrant church and the community was a humbling experience. It became apparent during the research process that I had to take intermittent vacations from my pastoral care duties for this project to materialize. This dissertation presents a 21st century masterpiece of development strategies focused on giving young adults the chance to build life-changing skills in the transition to fruitful adulthood and to promote an overall decrease in delinquent behavior. Above all, it fostered a new wave of transformational models and outcomes finding expression in a spiritual formation for marginalized Ghanaian young adults (18-22 years) in the diaspora.

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CHAPTER 1
THE SETTING

Pastor Ebenezer Annor hails from the country of Ghana (West Africa), "located in the middle of the world . . . the closest landmass to the actual center, where the equator and the Greenwich Meridian meet."[1] As the third-born child of 8 children of the Annor family, I was born into the Presbyterian Church and began my education from Presbyterian Primary School at the age of 3 years old from 1963 to 1971. As Ronald W. Richardson explains "family colors our experience of the rest of our life, shaping the way we tend to perceive ourselves, our relationships, the kinds of decisions we make, and the ways we make them."[2] My family's religious tradition influenced my decision to attend Presbyterian schools, where my beliefs, values, and way of living were shaped. I relocated to Mid-State of Ghana to continue my high school education from 1971 to 1974 where I obtained the high school certificate. After passing the entrance examination, I was admitted to secondary school in the Mid-State from 1974 to 1979 where I obtained the West African Examination Council General Certificate of Education (Ordinary Level). I embarked on further studies and later was employed in various sectors of the Ghanaian economy. While in my teens, I started having the desire to do the Lord's work and was therefore elected to various positions and services in the Presbyterian Church of

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[1] Kofi Ayim, *The Akan of Ghana: Aspects of Past and Present Practices* (North Charleston, SC: CreateSpace, 2015), 1.

[2] Ronald W. Richardson, *Becoming a Healthier Pastor: Family Systems Theory and the Pastor's Own Family* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 37.

Ghana. In time I felt called into the ministry of the Word and Sacrament, and in 1986

gained admission to the Christian College Seminary and where I also obtained a Diploma

in Biblical Studies at the University of Ghana. After completing my theological studies in

1989, I was posted to Patasi Presbyterian Church as pastor/evangelist in Kumasi from

1989 to 1996 "seeking simply to offer biblically based spiritual counsel,"[3] preaching and

teaching. I then began planting churches under the auspices of the Presbyterian Church of

Ghana (P.C.G.), West Africa. The first congregation I pastored was Patasi Presbyterian

Church and that became a springboard to plant additional churches in other parts of Ghana.

As a pastor/evangelist at the Patasi Presbyterian Church, the Lord opened the door

for me in September of 1996. I left the shores of Ghana, West Africa for the United

States to continue my theological education. On my arrival in the United States, I served

as an associate Pastor with the Manhattan Presbyterian Church from 1996 to 1998. I

enrolled at the Southern Baptist Seminary in Manhattan to pursue graduate theological

studies, but it was short-lived because of financial constraints. However, to ensure that

the work of the Lord continued among Ghanaians and "strive for freedom in every aspect

of their lives,"[4] I gathered a small group of people together in the year 2000 and we started

what has today become known as Trinity Presbyterian Church (PCUSA) in the Bronx, New

York.

Trinity Presbyterian Church is located in the faith community near Third Avenue

and East Tremont in the South Bronx, New York, a poor working-class neighborhood. It

is part of the Bronx Community District Six. East Tremont is a densely populated urban

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[3] David G. Benner, *Strategic Pastoral Counseling: A Short-Term Structured Model*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 13.

[4] Yolanda Y. Smith, *Reclaiming the Spirituals: New Possibilities for African American Christian Education* (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2010), 39.

neighborhood with a population of over 30,000 residents. Much of its real estate is made up of small to medium sized apartment buildings. Many of the buildings were erected before 1939, with a few put up between 1970 and 1999. However, at the time of writing this dissertation, there are new buildings being built in the district of the Bronx. There are big warehouses in the community that are used for business and religious purposes. There is a mix of occupational and cultural groups in the community where "children often express their concerns about violence through repetitive play enactment and through the use of drawings."[5] Also there is a unique mixture of Dominicans, Puerto Ricans, Italians, sub-Saharan Africans, White and African Americans that make up the residents of the community. The majority of the residents speak Spanish and many also speak African languages at home. This dimension of the community opened the door for Trinity Presbyterian Church to assume a multicultural congregation, one-third of the church membership being immigrants from West Africa. Many of the residents have low-income jobs. East Tremont has all kinds of stores that provide different services to the residents of the community. There are a couple of fast-food restaurants as well as a few financial institutions, like Chase Bank, Bank of America, and Citibank in the South Bronx community. Residents work in sales and service jobs ranging from major sales to fast-food restaurants. The one dominant employer in the community is St. Barnabas Medical Center, with "a corporate culture, a cohesion of values, myths, heroes, and symbols that

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[5] Nancy Boyd-Franklin, *Black Families in Therapy: Understanding the African American Experience*, 2nd ed. (New York: The Guilford Press, 2006), 169.

have come to mean a great deal to the people who work there,"[6] as well as the community.

Trinity Presbyterian Church has been in existence for the past 16 years and I am the first pastor to serve this congregation of the Reformed Tradition. My Christian vocation in the Reformed Tradition has to do with the call of God in my life, which strengthens my belief in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and accordingly, following Jesus in obedient discipleship. It consists of allowing God to use the gifts and abilities He has given me to honor and serve Him in families, the community, and the world at large. Such responses to God's call to faith in Jesus Christ involve the Word, the Sacrament, ministries of God's people, honor, worship and serving God in communities of diverse faith, in every aspect of human endeavor. Work and worship cannot be separated, both go hand-in-hand together; that includes regular Christian education. Yolanda Y. Smith states that "a holistic approach to Christian education requires a threefold vision. It must seek to address the intellectual, social, spiritual, physical and emotional concerns of the congregation."[7] This model of Christian education is designed to address the needs of the whole person. Singing hymns, psalms, other songs, and expressions of giving and sharing bring with it communal feelings in the service of the Lord's Day. Moreover, this Christian vocation is structured with the traditions of the Reformed Church and is organized and governed according to the Presbyterial order. In other words, this seeks genuine reform in faith and life and the hope we have in Jesus Christ in word and deed. It values a faithful and deep commitment to ministries of mission with certain basic

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[6] Terrence E. Deal and Allan A. Kennedy, *Corporate Cultures: The Rites and Rituals of Corporate Life* (New York: Addison-Wesley, 1982), 4.

[7] Smith, *Reclaiming the Spirituals*, 48.

principles such as the nature of church on earth, Jesus Christ as the only Head of His church, the nature of the church's authority, representative principle, government by elders, and the equality of the ministry. This affirms the "Introduction to the Setting: Guide to Writing a Congregational Profile," that covers three (3) broad areas that includes the identity of the congregation, the ministerial programs carried out by the congregation, and the capacities (tapped or untapped) for realizing effective change.[8]

The Presbyterian Reformed Church adheres to the structure and polity of Presbyterianism. It involves moving from the local level (congregational level), Presbytery, Synods, and the General Assembly. A structure of government based on grassroot participation which involves the Session, Elders (ruling elders), the ordained Pastor (teaching elder) to ensure the growth of the church. This system of grassroot participation allows the congregants the opportunity to express their views in the decision-making process of the church in adherence to rules and regulations of the constitution and the Book of Order as well as the Scriptures (1st Timothy 3). This structure also works through various committees which help the Session of the local congregation or the Presbytery, the Synod, or the General Assembly to sustain it.

As pastor of Trinity Presbyterian Church, I lead a diverse congregation (tribal affiliations) regularly to engage in evangelism, visitation, prayer vigils, and worship on the Lord's Day bringing a sense of emancipatory hope. Evelyn L. Parker writes that "emancipatory hope means to expect transformation of hegemonic relations of race,

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[8] "Introduction to the Setting: A Guide to Writing a Congregational Profile" (New York: New York Theological Seminary, 2016), 1.

class, and gender and to act as God's agent ushering in God's vision of human equality."[9] A vision William James says, "bears witness to the soul's emancipation."[10] The Lord has also blessed the church with a 15-seat passenger van and cargo truck ("Trinity Harvesters") to assist in our evangelism and outreach effort in the five boroughs of New York City. My expectation in ministry is that people will be lovers of Jesus Christ and Him crucified. The Word and Sacrament are at the heart of the Reformed Tradition. For that reason, I wish to preach Christ to as many people as possible, with all possible wisdom, cautioning and teaching them in order to help bring each one to the knowledge of God so that they will grow and mature into individuals united with Christ (Col. 1:28 GNT). Above all, I preach regularly, not only in my congregation, but other Presbyterian congregations and also non-denominational churches in New York City where I am placed on their preaching rosters, to be a voice to the voiceless and the oppressed in the community. Theologically, this strengthens the fact that "the identity of any congregation is ultimately found in God or in Jesus Christ. Such theological identification does not eradicate the specificity of a congregation's own particular life and ministry; however, any more than the identification of a particular individual believer with God eradicates the character or personality of that believer."[11]

My ideal role models for religious/spiritual development are Dr. Wilson Awasu, The Right. Rev. Frimpong-Manso, and Rev. Dr. Moses Biney, who have all been of immense help in this direction. They are patient and it has helped me in mentorship in

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[9] Evelyn L. Parker, *Trouble Don't Last Always: Emancipatory Hope Among African American Adolescents* (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2003), 6.

[10] William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature* (Middletown, DE: Seven Treasures Publications, 2009), 50.

[11] "Introduction to the Setting," 3.

diverse ways. Their counseling abilities and encouragement helped me to persevere in my pastoral ministerial journey. Always, they are there for me and I can tap into their rich experience as ministers of the Gospel with the PC(USA) and professorship.

My strengths include persuading people to succeed and mentoring young adults. I always like to invest in the success of others, especially the marginalized in the society, because these are the people that "throughout his ministry Jesus continually identified with those on the underside of the Roman Empire – the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, and the naked (Matt 25:40). His teaching of the kingdom tells us a story of an economic order where all people's basic human needs will be cared for."[12] Rev. Dr. Moses Biney and Dr. Wilson Awasu have been important persons in helping me to maintain the strength that the Lord has given me and in managing my weaknesses. This is because both have been my mentors and spiritual fathers, encouraging and counseling me through the path of my calling into the ministry.

After graduating with a Master of Divinity from New York Theological Seminary in Manhattan, I further pursued the Foundations in Chaplaincy Ministry course in order to help the disadvantaged in my neighborhood and to "be willing to listen carefully without judgment and without personal agenda."[13] Knowing that I "do not hold the key to their redemption . . . and to let them know their lives mean something to us and to others."[14] This took me to the St. Barnabas Hospital where it helped me not only to achieve better communication skills through interaction with patients at the hospital, but also to

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[12] Peter Goodwin Heltzel, *Resurrection City: A Theology of Improvisation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012), 57.

[13] Rita Nakashima Brock and Gabriella Lettini, *Soul Repair: Recovering from Moral Injury after War* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2012), 128.

[14] Ibid.

experience who I am in the caregiving ministry. My presence in the room of these patients helped a great deal; and with prayer and the direction of the Holy Spirit, the patients found solace and encouragement through the Word of God and the visitation as well. I have learned to listen without interruption and understand the hurting better with a compassionate heart as I helped them. As a result, theory and practice has transpired into hospital visitation skills and abilities to provide pastoral presence for the sick, the helpless and the vulnerable. Through this Chaplaincy Ministry, I have been equipped to have the desire for vision, mission, and passion for the caregiving ministry, in terms of awareness and understanding of illness and health, dying patients and the grieving family members.

Currently I am pursuing further studies in the Doctor of Ministry program at New York Theological Seminary because I believe that there is more room for improvement, in order to help people with the pastoral vision God has put inside of me. The love of God motivates my faith. Our contemporary church's concept about God requires more than theological degrees. It requires people with prophetic voices, people who have courage to lead the gospel with love and justice. "And this is precisely what God requires of congregations, to incarnate God's prophetic word of a good future with hope."[15] Most of the time our various churches are more like a country club. We allow people we like to come in. The Church has become institutionalized and does not care for those lost to the church. For that reason, the Church has excluded people in the name of doctrine; but Jesus says the practice of real Christian love is founded on commitment to help others, irrespective of religious affiliation. The steadfast love of God motivates me to proclaim

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[15] Parker, *Trouble Don't Last Always*, 9.

God as a loving Father in a crisis torn world that is human. As the Scripture says, "He [Jesus] said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Matthew 22:37-40 NRSV). This is most compelling because it has helped me to explore the mission, passion, and vision of theology constructively in relation to true humanity. God is on the side of people who are suffering, so I have to feel that pain of the suffering, as love motivates my faith to bring smiles to the face of the oppressed and the marginalized in our contemporary society.

In the final analysis, I am being challenged to reflect more on the theological statement my congregation is pursuing in its life, ministry, mission and spiritual practices in relation to the marginalized young adults. In order to do this, I need to draw upon resources that are beyond the life of the congregation itself, which will include Avery Dulles' four models of church: fellowship, servant, sacrament, and prophetic community.[16] Another resource I can draw upon is the "various Trinitarian models to reflect upon the congregation as being a fellowship in the Spirit, or the body of Christ on earth in this particular place, or a covenant community under the sovereignty of God."[17] More challenging to my project is the question: Can the Protestant principle of the prophetic nature of the word, can the Catholic principle of concrete nature of the sacrament share light upon my congregation, or can Israel's faith that is centered in temple worship of priestly, prophetic, and sagacious religion help me theologically in my

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[16] "Introduction to the Setting," 9.

[17] Ibid.

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congregation today,"[18] so as to help these marginalized young adults "reimagine their existence outside of their enslaved state."[19] This demands an ongoing analysis and consideration to achieve the mission and the vision for the marginalized Ghanaian young adults in the diaspora.

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[18] Ibid, 9-10.

[19] Heltzel, *Resurrection City*, 15.

CHAPTER 2
ANALYZING THE CHALLENGE

As a Ghanaian Minister of Religion at Trinity Presbyterian Church located in the Bronx and Prayer Watch Temple Ministries International Inc., in Williamstown, Syracuse, I have seen Ghanaian young adults 18-22 years who did not have the stability of safe housing – lack of parental nurturing, supportive/educational care, etc.; culminating in teenage pregnancy, drug addiction, orphans, and college dropouts. Out of concern for these marginalized Ghanaian young adults, this demonstration project will focus on creating a transitional living program for transforming and mentoring them to achieve their life dreams.

In my 20 years of pastoral care in the United States of America, I have been exposed to the deteriorating lives of the Ghanaian immigrant community in the diaspora; and this phenomenon is affecting the younger generation. My intention to begin a transitional living program for marginalized Ghanaian young adults in the diaspora is to serve as platform for mentoring them to achieve their life dreams, so as to break the cycle of oppression likely to affect the next generation. Many young adults today are involved in crime, drug and alcohol addiction, and gang related culture; and more importantly, they lack parental nurturing in their homes. For that reason, such social changes call for social analysis that "comes up strongly as people become convinced of the importance of a deeper look at our social reality and want to put into practice the tool for opening up that reality."[20]

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[20] Joe Holland and Peter Henriot, *Social Analysis: Linking Faith and Justice* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1995), 95.

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Social analysis is "the effort to obtain a more complete picture of a social situation by exploring its historical and structural relationship."[21] A generational crisis of abandoned young adults is brewing in our society today. In his analysis, G. Wade Rowatt, Jr. posits that "adolescence, the tough and turbulent time between childhood and adulthood, holds fascination for children and adults."[22] Right from childhood, children are given to babysitters to be taken care of as parents are busy with work and hardly spend quality time with their own children. As a result, there is a gradual loss of a parental relationship with their own children as they grow into adulthood and feel they are left alone to figure out life on their own.

Many young adults live in a world of their own, divorced from adult participation and relationships in their lives. About 60 percent of Ghanaian young adults living in the South Bronx are facing challenges of rejection. There is a systemic abandonment that has pervaded the Ghanaian culture in which parents, teachers, counselors, adults, even ministers of religion have ceased as a community to fulfill their commitments to our young adults. As a result of parents' failure to fulfill their role, young adults have become more vulnerable, contributing to increasing levels of crisis and what is widely being witnessed in our society today. Often, some adults believe they know what exactly their children need to do and will go to the extent of prescribing the best choice for them. This may include involving their kids in activities as a proof of their commitment to the young, for instance, driving their kids to soccer games, concerts, and competitions.[23]

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[21] Ibid., 98.

[22] G. Wade Rowatt, *Adolescents in Crisis: A Guide for Parents, Teachers, Ministers and Counselors* (Louisville: Westminister John Knox Press, 2001), 1.

[23] Chap Clark, *Hurt 2.0: Inside the World of Today's Teenagers* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 30.

However, the child's interest seems to be ignored, because parents are over-involved in how well their children are performing in these areas but unfortunately are not so much involved in other aspects of their lives, such as monitoring their personal, spiritual, academic and social lives; thus lacking emotional support when they most need it. In my opinion, we can be over-involved in the wrong things, and uninvolved in the right things, both at the same time. Undoubtedly, these young adults lack identity of purpose in life endeavors. Equally enough, instability pervades the social, cultural, and religious spectrum of American and Western society. Many young adults, who are in the gang culture, are insecure, in wrong relationships, angry, confused, and frustrated. Though some of these young adults are in church, it doesn't mean all is well. Some of the best churched young adults have been the most vulnerable young adults who are "struggling with significant questions of cultural identity . . . the tensions, contradictions, fears, doubts, hopes and 'deferred' dreams that are part and parcel of living a borrowed and colonized cultural existence"[24] from the yoke of British colonialism, which their parents have passed down to them. Surprisingly, we pursue the ones outside the church. Sustaining these young adults in the faith takes a lot of work because of signs of abandonment that have featured prominently in their lives.

For the past twenty years of ministry, my involvement with young adults has given me enormous experience because of categories of faith practices that these young adults are involved in. Some young adults adhere to the traditional church beliefs. They are committed to church traditions and want to be in high mass churches as the clear focus on the source of their own faith tradition has the practical effect of making the

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[24] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 30th ed. (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2000), 11.

boundaries between the Christian denominations more permeable.[25] In a sense, churches

that have a lot of tradition, authority and faith practices that are clearly defined. Their

mainstream faith is quite privatized and is focused on inner piety of being good,

righteous, and holy.

Then there is another group of young adults who have lived in homes where the

family has been traditional Christian believers. Theirs is selective adherence. This group

selects which churches are helpful and which ones are not, based on their own lifestyles

and what they believe in. And so if they want to associate with others, they want to be

more environmentally friendly and have some causes that they want to fight for, they

select a church that suits what they want to pursue. They will disagree, neglect, or ignore

the official teaching of the church. You can preach whatever you want to preach from the

pulpit, and though they will be there at the prayer meeting and listen, they will select the

message that suits their desires.

There is also the third group who are spiritually open and effective. "I mean a

creative energetic, committed group of youth who are spiritually, physically, emotionally

and socially directed toward desired and planned goals."[26] They are not personally

committed to one faith or another but are receptive and mildly interested in spiritual

matters. They are more interested in what God means to them, but if you come and

convince them that this faith practice is important for their lifestyle, they will believe it. If

any person comes in and he coherently explains to them why they should follow that

faith, they are likely to be disciples because they are open-minded about things. They

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[25] Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Discipleship*, vol. 4 *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works*, ed. Geffrey B. Kelly and John D. Godsey (Grand Rapids, MI: Fortress Press, 2003), 314.

[26] Robert S. Coombs, *Building an Effective Youth Program: A Tool for Ecumenical Congregations* (Chicago: Community Church Press), vi.

won't hold on to doctrine they can't understand and "a decision of the heart rather than the intellect is to accept the coexistence of different faiths and to do so not grudgingly but willingly."[27]

Then there is this fourth group who are religiously indifferent. They may claim to be religious but to them it doesn't really matter. They could as well dispense with the church as any other thing and don't "focus on positive role models."[28] The fifth group is the religiously disconnected. These are the ones whose upbringing does not expose them to any religious practice. They grew up in homes where religion wasn't important to the family. These disconnected young adults take a very harsh and opposing view of religion and they get close to atheism, turn derogatory, and become antagonistic toward religion. They are not agnostic, but they take a more antagonistic attitude towards religion. They just hate religious people and anything that has to do with religion. They will even want to go to the extent of destroying religious things. While some believe in a higher power, others don't believe in anything, even the institution called church and its practices. Sometimes some of these youths have a sense of spirituality and may want to bypass these religious institutions which they see as hypocritical and want to have a relationship with what they call a higher power, rather than go to church. Some simply don't care about church or any other religion. To some ecclesiastical observers, this could be one of the factors that have led to adolescents or young people not going to church and becoming marginalized.

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[27] David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, 20th ed. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011), 495.

[28] Boyd-Franklin, *Black Families in Therapy*, 32.

Today, parents are preoccupied with job opportunities and higher educational pursuits to the extent that the concept of faith formation and spiritual transformation for these young adults are absent, let alone nurturing the next generation. The simple impartation of religious education and lived faith experience is more rooted in the family's reception of the Christian message. Harold W. Burgess states that "imparting information is ordinarily considered a necessary aim, though not the ultimate goal, of religious education."[29] Instead, most parents will pride themselves with success stories of their kids to the neglect of their spiritual development. These young adults are no more a priority in their families and the church establishment. From my perspective, these young adults are not the problem, though some may argue that most of them are involved in maladdictive behaviors and other social ills that they love to target as indicators of crisis. However, in my opinion, we adults are the problem because "there are many issues concerning fatherhood that may become secrets in some African American families."[30] We have created a kind of systemic abandonment of the young adults that has pervaded the Western and the American culture. This project of a transitional living program for marginalized Ghanaian young adults in the diaspora is meant to somehow understand this world of young adults. There is the need for the church leadership to be acquainted with their world and understand what it feels like to be in their situation. It is not enough to know, but to experience it, so as to recognize their situation. It is a concept of a

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[29] Harold W. Burgess, *Models of Religious Education: Theory and Practice in Historical and Contemporary Perspective* (Nappanee, IN: Warner Press, 2001), 164.

[30] Boyd-Franklin, *Black Families in Therapy*, 70.

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"wounded healer" whereby empathy, sympathy and interpathy become the walking stick into their world, filled "with the pressures of an oppressive society."[31]

When we look at the Christian faith tradition as a central resource from which we draw on to do our outreach program, we see the notion of being attuned right to the hurt of humanity in general and the hurt of young adults in particular, as it traces throughout scripture with the words: "For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15 NSRV). In a sense, we are wounded healers, that even in the Christ's figure Himself there is symbiotic relationship being played out between humanity and divinity, where the divine figure incarnated to be so near, to touch the feelings of yearning families as well as the hurt of the young adults and the poor in the society. Because we ourselves have been touched in some way, we can offer comfort to those who find themselves in the same situation. It is an experiential anatomy of knowing how you feel and how you can feel for the young adults; thus, a theology of presence inviting the marginalized young adults to embrace the love of Christ. It is not a ministry of having a kind of salvic power to save them, but viewed "in terms of the incarnate Christ, the human Jesus of Nazareth who wearily trod the dusty roads of Palestine where he took compassion on those who were marginalized."[32] He is also the wounded healer who today sides with the young adults who suffer in the Ghanaian community of America and their alcoholic parents whose

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[31] Ibid., 8.

[32] Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 524.

addiction breeds willfulness within them, yet, eroding their freewill and eating away at their dignity. Nevertheless, grace is where their hope lies.[33]

My personal regret which has become a working experience for me is a sense of arrogance that I employed into the youth ministry 25 years ago when I was a youth minister, with the notion that I could rescue these troubled Ghanaian young adults without recognizing their embattled situation. I realized that when you are uninformed, you are deformed; when you are informed, you will be reformed; and the day you will discover, you will recover to *"be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the master, prepared for every good work"* (2 Timothy 2:21b, NKJV). Indeed, my insightful recovery has brought a sense of brokenness to help these adolescents in the diaspora. Unless we the adults and the church leadership recognize the hurt in our own lives and tell our story to these confused Ghanaian young adults, we can't deal with the hurt in the life of these wonderful young adults who are the future generational legacy. It is on this note that the challenge statement is inviting me and my site team to begin a journey of discovery and recovery for a sustainable future for these Ghanaian young adults' liberation and transformation.

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[33] Gerald G. May, *Addiction and Grace: Love and Spirituality in the Healing of Addictions* (New York: HarperCollins, 1998), 4.

CHAPTER 3
IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

This action research study provides opportunities and supports through transitional living intervention programs that help marginalized young adults, between the ages of 18-22, gain the competencies and knowledge needed to make a productive adulthood, as they learn to navigate society independently. In the United States, the ages between 18 and 30 is heralded for its late adolescence formative potential, yet revealing unstable selection of critical life tasks: choosing a college, moving away from home for the first time, buying or renting home, making independent financial decisions, choosing, and maintaining church commitments, forging new friendships and relationships with members of the opposite sex, and embracing the potential for singleness, engagement, marriage, and parenting.[34] In view of this, the tradition of participatory research, the legacy of Paulo Freire that puts the researcher in relation to the community, so as to produce critical knowledge aimed at social transformation[35] was used as a framework to interview young adults; with backgrounds relating to high school/college dropouts, drug addicts, gangsters, orphans, ex-convicts, and single parent youths, dependent on other adults for forms of financial assistance.

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[34] David P. Setran and Chris A. Kiesling, *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood: A Practical Theology for College and Young Adult Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), 1.

[35] Kathryn Herr and Gary L. Anderson, *The Action Research Dissertation: A Guide for Students and Faculty* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2015), 16.

In-depth interviews (including exclusive interviews with specific individuals), questionnaires, a 16-week focus group, youth conference participant teams, follow-up participants check, and collaborative analysis were used. Multiple strategies were discovered and analyzed, and models of young adulthood development initiatives, identifying: (a) some programs that set forth the needs of young adults and the provision of required resources that could assist young adults 18-22 years grow up to be healthy, self-sufficient, and responsible adults; (b) what inputs can impact model of development effectiveness and try to nurture skills in young adults, including positive health behaviors, positive family formation, leadership skills, etc. in order to encourage career exploration and improve self-confidence; and (c) the effects/consequences that can occur if these desired outcomes are not achieved in order to help young adults achieve productive adulthood and a better future.

Methodology

The research for this study included both library and field-work. The library sources included architectural documents on buildings to meet the code and demands of the facility in terms of the site planning, as well as journals on developing disconnected youth and reports. These sources are supplemented by works of the ministry, traditional historians and renowned theologians. In addition, the views of clergy, educationists, and other professionals, as well as young adults were solicited during fieldwork through interviews, questionnaires and "rehearsal stories (a story out of the past that contains the same themes of the current problems facing the person."[36] For instance, prior to the implementation process of this study project, emails and letters of invitation were sent to

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[36] John Savage, *Listening and Caring Skills in Ministry: A Guide for Groups and Leaders*, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 84-85.

documented and undocumented immigrants in the church and community settings who offered to participate and they did.

Strategically, participants embraced "inclusive procedures that provide them with a clear vision of their directions and intentions."[37] According to Kathryn Herr and Gary L. Anderson, an action research dissertation "is the new kid on the block…it is different in that research participants themselves either are in control of the research or are participants in the design and methodology of the research."[38] In this regard, it will be a rewarding experience for me (researcher) and the participants to initiate promising programs for transitioning young adults in the diaspora, and more importantly, in consultation with specialized personnel to provide appropriate guidelines on service plans and programs.

This process should help to improve a transitional living program's quality as it may strengthen young adult ties to community, family, and friends; encourage the integration process of the Ghanaian young adults in every aspect of the program; while developmentally, providing the individual young adult appropriate skills for rediscovering educational achievement, such as Ghanaian folktales and the art of traditional storytelling, which involve the use of narrative style. Thus, in the process of action research, the use of narrative style allows researchers to reflect on the process and findings of their research, and this is rarely expressed easily as propositional knowledge; the purpose of "which transcend mere knowledge of generation to include personal and professional growth, and organizational and community empowerment." [39]

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[37] Ernest Stringer, *Action Research*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2014), 191.

[38] Herr and Anderson, *The Action Research Dissertation*, 1.

[39] Ibid., 2.

I opted to use a qualitative research method which "is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem";[40] and because the procedure of this study includes open-ended questions, therefore, it makes sense to apply qualitative research tools. In other words, this study incorporated both action research and qualitative research methods to reflect the process and findings, and developed a plan/curriculum model that leads to successful educational pursuit for the young adult generation. Also chosen to clarify participants' understanding of the future prospects of the program, both general and specific methods were used. The general methods include description, critical reflection narrative style and comparative analysis. The specific methods involved interviews, informal conversation, questionnaires, and focus group discussions in developing a curriculum/model program for young adult participants and their immigrant parents, to assist them in making a successful and fruitful transition to productive adulthood.

Looking at this further, the trend of Paulo Freire's participatory research tradition, consisting of thematic research project, encourages me to draw upon "a highly inductive process which research is seen as a form of social action. In this type of research, *generative themes* or issues of vital importance to community members, are identified and used as a basis for literacy instruction and also studied in a collaborative fashion."[41] Accordingly, the use of this tradition assisted participants to engage in social critique and social action, giving them insights into the neglected world of the young adults. As a result, the subject-object relationship of the young adults was transformed into a subject-

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[40] John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches,* 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2009), 4.

[41] Ibid., 17.

subject relationship through meaningful dialogue. Research and action, therefore, become a single process; and the participants and I produced critical, integrative knowledge aimed at social transformation for the future generation, to be applied to a concrete situation and to change participants' social environment.

Participants

Research participants were two groups of Ghanaian young adults (18-22 years), from high school to college students. The first group of 26 participants was comprised of undocumented immigrant young adults, while the second group is made up of young adults born in the United States of America. Overall, 67 participants were involved in the project, including immigrant parents. The age of their immigrant parents ranges from 45 to 54 years, often lacking English proficiency. Therefore, educational experiences vary from couple to couple.

Figure 1 Young Adult Participants

Procedure

Field Entry: Research highlights were brought to the attention of immigrant parents and young adults age (18-22 years) in Prayer Watch Temple Ministries, and the

Bronx community through emails, informed consent letters, family networks, as well as a cross disciplinary contextual approach; a postmodern purpose to develop contextual understanding of persons in crisis and formulate strategies for seeking their well-being and justice.[42] Young adults who responded included former gangsters and prisoners, often without family support, and with the stigma of a prison record hanging over them. Some have traumatic histories, histories of violence, physical and sexual abuse, and mental health and substance abuse problems; have engaged in risky behaviors; and are mostly children of low-income immigrants with limited education and work experience. However, this did not deter them from participating.

In light of what the project would accomplish, responses to the initial meeting were encouraging. Fifteen zealous young adults attended, together with their single parents and the wisdom of community leaders were brought to bear on the meeting. These leaders gave constructive suggestions of godly way of life that transforms negative cultural beliefs and practices. During the introductory discussion and presentation of the project, participants acknowledged with keen interest and sense of acceptance, followed by a deep interaction of issues. A follow-up meeting was suggested by a broad spectrum of participants and this paved the way for another group meeting, in order to take a closer look at the purpose and scope of study project. Through text messaging and face-to-face conversation, old and new participants were invited to the next meeting.

As was expected, high attendance was recorded at this second meeting with twenty-four (24) participants in session, including community leaders. Participants present at this scheduled meeting were thoroughly informed of the purpose and the scope

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[42] Carrie Doehring, *The Practice of Pastoral Care: A Postmodern Approach* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 9.

of the study project in order to consider a plan of action. They explored ideas, others were interviewed, and their reflections/arguments were well noted. This supports Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams' assertion that one has to "examine a kind of argument that is less like a contentious debate and more like a thoughtful conversation in which, together with others, you explore ideas on issues that you all believe are important."[43] In the conversation, everyone brings their opinions and makes claims that are new and important to the research and its readers, and everyone should be able to explain their claims by supporting them with good reasons, grounds and evidence.[44]

I, at the commencement of the discussion, discussed informed consent in detail; confidentially was emphasized, as well as the emotional/psychological consequences of participation. After willing participants signed the consent form, group discussion commenced, in an atmosphere of learning.[45]

Data Sources: Due to the lack of official data on Ghanaian immigrant youth living in the United States, the data collection protocol for this study project included in-depth and standard unstructured interviews, life stories, participant observation, informal conversation, questionnaires, group discussions; as well as time spent with undocumented Ghanaian drug addicts and gangsters aged 18-22 years in the neighborhood of the South Bronx, and "spiritual but not religious" young adults born in America. This study also employs Ghanaian traditional information-oriented rallying technique locally known as

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[43] Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb and Joseph M. Williams, *The Craft of Research* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 86.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Ibid., 15.

"Obi nim Obi" (in the Akan language, meaning, somebody knows or relates to someone), in which the participants could refer or name their friends or other individuals in the population as potential interviewees. This technique enabled me to get 26 participants as my first group.

Data used in this study was initially collected on March 25, 2017 from the participating twenty-six undocumented Ghanaian young adults living in the South Bronx. All participants were 18 years and older and the interviews were conducted at the residence of one participant, a student at Bronx Community College, who also acted as the liaison for the study. The coordinating interviews held in his home were conducted face-to-face in Twi, a Ghanaian language, and English, and was recorded (later transcribed and analyzed). Each interview ranged from half an hour to a little over one hour, flexible enough to allow the participants' time to reflect and then answer, not rushing their responses. Though some participants did not respond to all the questions posed to them; importantly to make sure, further information was harnessed by making follow-ups at the end of the interview and accepting them as persons in process, not finished products, as important in someone they trust.[46]

Another data collection for this study was obtained from exclusive interviews, questionnaires, group discussions, and daily interactions administered to thirty-four Ghanaian young adults aged 18-22 years, born in America, and their immigrant parents, as the second group. This was to determine the magnitude of their marginalization and administered mainly to those in the church and ex-church members. Specifically, all the thirty-four young adult participants and their immigrant parents participated in 150-

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[46] Rowatt, *Adolescents in Crisis*, 188.

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minute in-depth discussion questions, which began with reflective and challenging

questions like: "What are their specific needs?" "How do they see the importance of

program interventions?" and "What outcomes for young adults are most likely to be

influenced by program interventions for a better future?"

After the initial questions and group discussion, all thirty-four young adults

together with the initial group of twenty-six and their immigrant parents became the

focus group participants. These participants evaluated, examined, and identified the

necessity of some programs that could assist young adults in the transition to productive

adulthood. The two focus groups of participants provided an innovative and interactive

environment, which made them eager to learn how to better understand the importance of

educational program interventions, based on the extent of questions asked and analyzed.

Subsequent group sessions and consultative meetings involving specialized personnel

built on the meetings with my research questions. I took a participant-observer role as a

less-active participant to fully play an active participatory role to and at the end.[47] This

energized participants to exchange views and think through the plan/model program that

can provide opportunities and meaning in the life of young adults.

Documentary evidence from research questions and research knowledge resources

completed the data set for the program model-generative themes, opportunities for young

adults, resource inputs and young adults' outcomes. These data and resources consisted

of participants' answers to research questions, discussions, and research resources.

Data Collection, Analysis, and Writing. Stringer explains that the use of the basic

action research routine of look (define and describe problem); think (analyze and

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[47] Patricia A. Adler and Peter Adler, *Membership Roles in Field Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 1987), 1.

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interpret situation to understand the problem); and act (formulate solution to the problem) "makes a complex array of influences and activities. The research task becomes a social process in which people extend and reconstruct information emerging from their inquiry (data and analysis) through continuing cycles of exchange, negotiation realignment and repair."[48] This aided in the central concern for accuracy in qualitative research evidentiary adequacy, which is the sufficient time in the field and extensiveness of the body of evidence used as resource and data.[49] Such body of evidence gave me an insightful new wave of data knowledge on how to discern the problem and life situations of these marginalized young adults, as I develop a plan of action to improve the lives of this hurting generation.

Resources and data consisted of over 592 hours of research, interviews, group sessions, and follow-up sessions with participants combined, over a period of 6-8 months. The data quantity consisted of field notes (interviews and group sessions, research resources, oral traditional sources), reflections, and participants' shared document. This valuable means and source of information in collaboration with practical experiments empowered me to think, love, give, and speak with incarnational vision based on the "wounded-healer" ministry, through the pages of this project, in terms of mission, vision, passion, compassion, and participation.

During the analytic and writing process, answers to questions, discussions, and research data and resources were used. The analytical process began with open coding, which "allows the theorist to begin generating thematic categories from qualitative

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[48] Stringer, *Action Research*, 75.

[49] Merlin C. Wittrock, ed., *Handbook of Research on Teaching*, 3rd ed. (New York: MacMillan Reference Books, 1986), 119-161.

data."[50] As a result, participants' words, sentences, experiences, and thoughts were examined. The language of participants guided the development of answers, discussions and data resources. As they were compared and contrasted, they gradually yielded and embraced categories of intervention programs. Moreover, articles, journals, and books were applied to document and used to enrich the analytic process in order to make implicit and explicit thoughts, and to expand the data quantity. This consisted of questionnaires and various research resources about the information (data) and emerging theory surrounding transitional living program for young adults.

Results

The action research model for creating an intervention program for marginalized young adults, age 18-22 years in a transitional living productive adulthood is presented below. In the discussion and the questionnaire, as well as various interactions, it was realized that for the program of intervention to effectively impact the holistic life of the young adults for a better future, they need to be well-informed about the models of development programs that can assist them to productive adulthood. At best, not what our religion counsels or says to them, but what religion offers to meet their own needs.[51]

There were four (4) major categories that resulted in the discussions and the questions to design the program model — the generative themes; opportunities for young adults (e.g. land, structural environment, and program facilities); resource inputs; and young adult outcomes. The organizational structure for the transitional living program for the Ghanaian marginalized young adults (18-22 years) in the diaspora, as seen below,

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[50] Richard A. Swanson and Elwood F. Holton III, eds., *Research in Organization: Foundations and Methods of Inquiry* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 2005), 357.

[51] Howard Thurman, *Jesus and the Disinherited* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996), 3.

will be known as "New Wave Care" under Prayer Watch Temple Ministries International Incorporated (PWTMI), Bronx, New York.
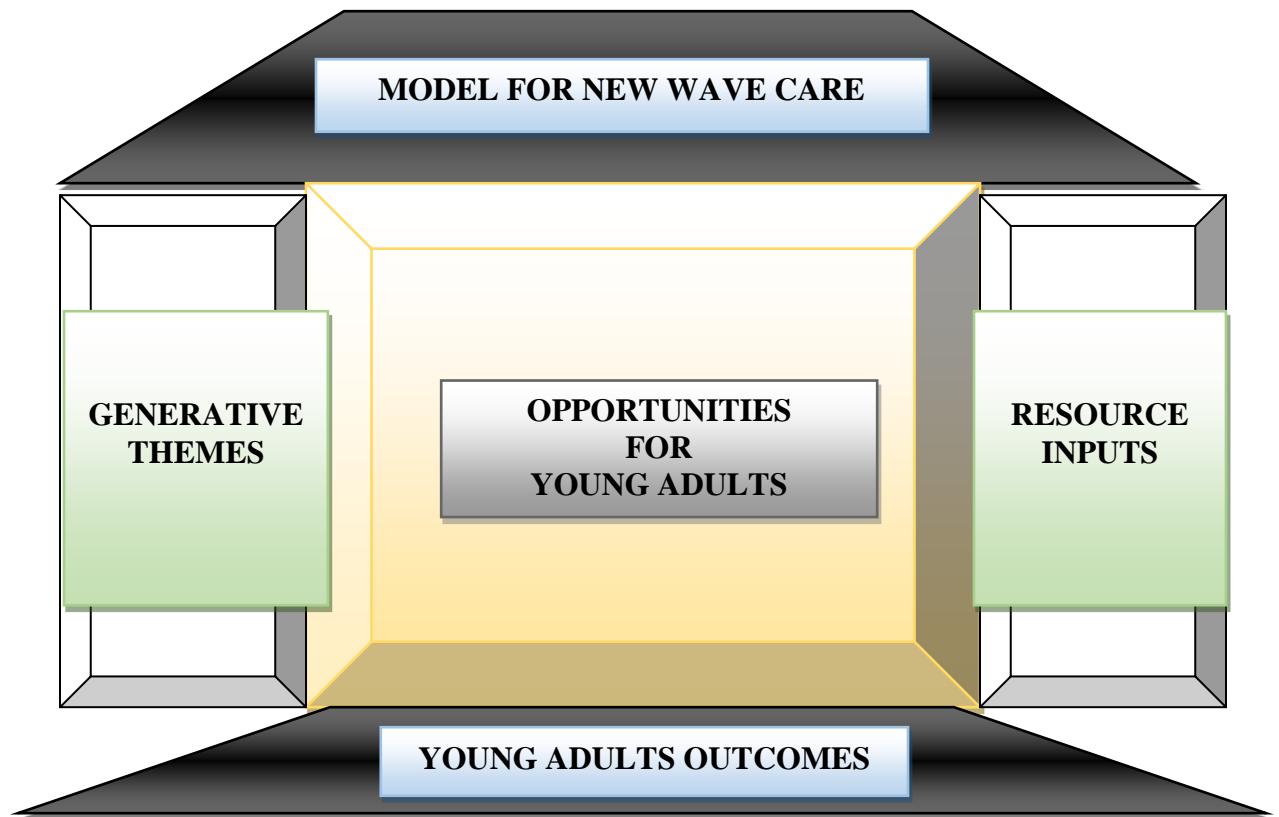
Figure 2: Model for New Wave Care

Generative Themes

From the data (discussions and questionnaire) and research resources, it was learned that generative themes — social and education, economic and investments, health and safety, as well as marital and emotional support — should be considered as human capital for such engagement. More importantly, spiritual formation was also included "to discover their own spiritualities, affirm the spirituality of one another, and deepen the practices that enrich everyone in the community."[52]

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[52] Maria Harris, *Fashion Me A People: Curriculum in the Church* (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1989), 103.

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Social and Educational Support

Research data showed that "the American government provides little support compared with its European counterparts, and it is difficult for young adults who have not transitioned to full-time work to support themselves."[53] According to Monica Kirkpatrick Johnson

> [A]lthough the United States does not have the most prolonged transition to adulthood, a recent comparison of 19 countries named the United States as having the most destandardized transition to adulthood . . . A destandardized transition to adulthood presents not only new opportunities to young people but also new risks, and how successfully young people navigate this critical period is likely to have lifelong implications, because the decisions young people make about education, work, and family at this time structure later opportunities.[54]

As a result, "families are the primary 'scaffolding' and 'safety net' for young people traversing this new terrain. This is particularly true in nations with weaker social safety nets, such as the United States."[55] In the light of unsustainability of the family, "safety net" because of the current economic crisis and non-existing social action programs within the Ghanaian immigrant churches, families are divided, education is disrupted, and access to work opportunities can no longer be relied on at a time when young people face important changes.

Young adults' challenges as recommended from discussions and questionnaire are based on the current state of knowledge. And research resources appear sufficient considering the scope of mission at hand, which seems to focus on key domains of education, employment, and spirituality. In my personal observation, education is highly

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[53] Caroline Sten Hartnett et al., "Parental Support during Young Adulthood: Why Does Assistance Decline with Age?" *Journal of Family Issues* 34, no.7 (July 2013): 975-1007.

[54] Monica Kirkpatrick Johnson, "Parental Financial Assistance and Young Adults' Relationships with Parents and Well-Being," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 75, no. 3 (June 2013): 713-733.

[55] Ibid.

valued as core capital and is the primary means of securing a good paying job in the United States. Andorra Bruno explains that "academic qualification was partly a criterion used for resettlement in the United States by recruitment and resettlement agents. It enhances individual integration (i.e. getting a job) that leads to self-sufficiency."[56]

Nearly a majority of Ghanaian immigrants after arriving in the United States through the United States Diversity Visa Program accept the most readily available forms of employment, which are often low paying jobs. Many, for various reasons, are not able to attend school to advance their education and professional training. Some of the young adult participants interviewed said they had attained partial scholarships to help them pursue college education. While others explained that immediately after their arrival in the United States, they were left to look for jobs and fend for themselves. As a result, they did not have time to acculturate and learn important American cultural values, such as going to school and getting an education, which some did not get a chance to acquire in Ghana.

The first group: In this category of generative themes, participants who had not become U.S. permanent residents were interviewed. They were comprised of Ghanaian young adults who arrived in the United States with a five-year visa, hoping it is enough to guarantee them jobs and educational opportunities in America, but had their visas expire. They were actually aware that education and academic qualifications are crucial to successful living in the United States socially, and enhancing their integration leading to self-sufficiency.

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[56] Andorra Bruno, *Refugee Admissions and Resettlement Policy* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2017), https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL31269.pdf.

Sixteen out of twenty-six young adult participants in this study had acquired some form of higher education in Ghana, but on arrival in the United States, enrolled in a home health aid program and other menial jobs. Having secured this opportunity by residing with white and African-American citizens through a home health aide job gave them an opportunity for "positive intercultural relations and successful adaptation."[57] For instance, in addition through such home care jobs, families assisted them in improving their proficiency in English, keeping time, being efficient, effective, and compassionate, communicating with patients, family, and co-workers. They also learned patience, dependability, perceptiveness, reliability, creativity, multi-tasking, paying attention to detail and always exercising good judgment. Currently, immigration problems have made some of them jobless.

The remaining eight participants of the first group stunned me with their level of skill proficiency. This participant confirms:

> I did get support from my immediate Ghanaian families, yes, I did. They will take me to churches to help fix their breakdown computer and musical equipment, like as if I had my own business to run. They would come and pick me up or drop me off until I had my car. It was a nice care and the little money I derived from servicing such equipment paid for my car till it was done. Although churches hardly invite me nowadays to fix their broken down equipment. While in Ghana, my parents paid my tuition and housing bills. In America, you can die if you don't work because no one cares. I am living on my own waiting for right opportunity to get the proper work permit to work.[58]

A great majority of these participants at the time of undertaking these interviews were struggling with mounting challenges, which indicates the importance of "young people begin[ning] to own the Augustinian awareness…that not everything we long or

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[57] J. W. Berry et al., eds., *Immigrant Youth in Cultural Transition: Acculturation, Identity, and Adaptation Across National Contexts* (New York: Psychology Press, 2012), 13.

[58] Interview with author, Bronx, NY, March 25, 2017.

lust for is something we should really want."[59] Nearly all participants in this first group indicated that ten years after arriving in the United States, they did not receive any kind of support from the religious organizations (the church) they attended.

The second group: The second group of thirty-four young adults were American citizens by virtue of birth. Their immigrant parents had been in America for the past twenty-seven years or more, and had become naturalized citizens, some with two job schedules. They were facing great challenges of divorce, domestic violence, and fathers leaving mothers to resettle permanently in Ghana. This supports Ben Sasse's assertion that many of them "are accidental 'helicopter parents', hovering over their children, making sure they are safe and protected, never bored, and on schedule . . . These problems are very significantly the result of broader cultural assumptions that made parenting, paradoxically, more time-consuming and ever-present and yet simultaneously less goal-oriented."[60] In their world, "changing conditions call for adaptation: exploring new areas, seeking new opportunities – all in the effort to maintain its way of life among the shadow of the forest."[61]

This can be the result of their immigrant mothers working hard to take care of them, pay for their school, buy their clothes, books, food, and other essentials of life. Living in New York City is too expensive, so single parents are doing two jobs. One participant said:

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[59] Ben Sasse, *The Vanishing American Adult: Our Coming-of-Age Crisis–and How to Rebuild a Culture of Self-Reliance* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2017), 125.

[60] Ibid., 46.

[61] Paul Stoller, *Money Has No Smell: the Africanization of New York City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 44.

While growing up, my daddy wasn't around to take care of me and because my mother was a Home Care Provider, she was always away from home. As the only child of my mother, I had to figure out how to be on my own. So I started living alone. My high school friends gave me bad advice and I started doing drugs with them. We started going to parties and will have sex with multiple girls. I joined a gang and started having problems with the law till I almost landed in jail. Now, I am proud that I want to continue my education. I just want a quiet life; build myself and pursue a bright future.[62]

The second group had 17 high school and college dropouts; some single mothers living with their single adult parents. They looked more relaxed and talked more freely than the first group of undocumented young adults. They said they considered themselves like any other Americans and prided themselves on being able vote in federal elections like any other American. While smiling, one participant had this to say:

In difficult times like these, having access to American welfare programs is relieving, but I just felt like a very low-class person as compared to most American young adults who have achieved the American Dream. I hope this transitional living program will bring hope to struggling young adults such as myself (smile).[63]

Nearly all participants said they intended to stay in the United States, transform their lives, and build a meaningful, healthy future. But at some time in their life, they will go back to Ghana and visit their families over there. Three immigrant parents of the second group of young adults had difficulty obtaining employment because they lacked English language proficiency and could only secure temporary jobs as manual laborers. To this effect, their parents use their apartment premises to run business as a second job.

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[62] Interview with author, Bronx, NY, May 19, 2017.

[63] Interview with author, Bronx, NY, June 9-11, 2017.

This includes "retail of African groceries, clothes, etc.…businesses embedded in the ethnic identities of their owners."[64] One participant (English not fluent) said:

> I don't have a job while in Ghana. I did not go to school in Ghana. I only took care of my family bakery. I like bakery work a lot. When I came to the U.S., I have to be on my own. I have to pay bills and later take care of my two kids, whose father divorced me and relocated to Ghana. I can't get a nice paying job because I don't speak good English, so I can't get enough money to take care of my young ones, therefore, they settled for less.[65]

Both group participants indicated that education and employment were important in achieving economic self-sufficiency. Finding an education and well-paying job was utterly important to every participant, so as to realize their life dreams. According to Mark Bixler, immigrants' hopes of getting well-paying jobs would enable them to build socio-economic upward mobility.[66] Education and employment not only help elevate young adults' status but enhance their socio-economic awareness to avoid exploitative living in American mainstream society.

Counseling and Investment Pathways

Relevant information of some aspects of young adults' risky behavioral problems and a survey of the causes, effects, counseling considerations and suggested ways to prevent these problems is a trigger for counseling in dealing with such situation. Gary R. Collins indicates that, "counseling attempts to provide encouragement and guidance for those who are facing losses, decisions, or disappointments….help people cope more effectively with the problems of living, with inner conflict, and with crippling emotions,

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[64] Ian E. A. Yeboah, *Black African Neo-Diaspora: Ghanaian Immigrant Experiences in the Greater Cincinnati, Ohio Area* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2008), 92.

[65] Interview with author, Bronx, NY, July 17-18, 2017.

[66] Mark Bixler, *The Lost Boys of Sudan: An American Story of the Refugee Experience* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2006), 1.

assist individuals, family members….and persons whose life patterns are self-defeating

and causing unhappiness."[67] Diverse challenges have set young adults on a course that

have strongly affected the trajectories of their young adulthood lives. Consequently,

young adults today follow less predictable pathways than those in previous generations

and this insightful information and data gathering is helping me to understand the

strategic plan of providing, supporting, and facilitating access to services/resources for

other young adults' needs, which include:

- Counseling;
- Mentoring;
- Other mental health and healing services;
- Job readiness/training;
- Substance abuse services; and
- Self-sufficiency skills to avoid co-dependency (relationships drugs) etc.[68]

Although the list above was stated in multiple interviews, questionnaires, and

group meetings, there was not necessarily an agreement on all of the stated needs. For

instance, while nearly all participants stated that the disconnected young adults needed

counseling, most interviews and scheduled group meetings did not think that counseling

was a primary need. As one social worker in the group meeting stated:

> There is no doubt counseling is a service the disadvantaged young adults
> would want. However, they don't necessarily need counseling. Counseling
> can pathologize the young people. And they wouldn't need as much of
> counseling if they had housing, stability, and self-sufficiency skills to meet
> their needs.[69]

Yet it was recommended that these challenges mitigate some referrals to social

service or specialized agencies involved in trauma education or various fields of

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[67] Gary R. Collins, *Christian Counseling: A Comprehensive Guide*, rev. ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1988), 16.

[68] Collins, *Christian Counseling*, 193.

[69] Interview with author, Bronx, NY, August 5, 2017.

psychology to better serve segments of this young adult population. Additionally, engagement will be made with faith-based youth community organizing (YCO), to help equip New Wave Care marginalized young adults "with a complex set of skills, strategies, and perspectives that enable them to resist, address, and transform personal and social evil and to effect change in their neighborhoods, schools, and community institutions."[70]

Research data also asserts that the complexities of their lives may bring these young adults into contact with multiple institutions like criminal justice, health care, education, job training services, legal and educational advocacy groups, and other support groups for available services for young adults to re-define their identity and regain a sense of belonging. In contrast, some participants entertain pessimistic views to the effect that some programing will not resonate with the young adults. As one interviewee pointed out, "as parents we think we know better. We have to be aware of adultism. We probably don't know their lives as well as they do. Therefore, we don't know what is best for them. We can't force our plan for them and on them. These young adults have to be part of the plan. Rather, we have to support them in healthy decision-making towards transition to independent living."[71] This is important because doing nothing will generate far higher costs with far fewer satisfactory results. Undoubtedly, all this new level of commitment awareness vis-à-vis the generative themes emerging from the interviews, questionnaires, group meetings, and programs pertaining to young adults, can only happen through areas of education in academic skills and employment, civic engagement,

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[70] Almeda Wright and Mary Elizabeth Moore, eds., *Children, Youth, and Spirituality in a Troubling World* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2008), 154.

[71] Interview with author, New York, NY, April 20, 2017.

health safety, mentoring, counseling, training in life and social skills, moral values, character expectations and positive behaviors, routines and traditions, self-sufficiency and work, educational achievement, social and emotional well-being, traditional/cultural innovations (e.g. folktales – "Kwaku Anase stories"), and family formation for Ghanaian marginalized young adults in the diaspora. Additionally, polices, specified services, and a designed curriculum program addressing young adult Ghanaian population challenges will be coordinated to help them assume adult roles, develop marketable skills, and adopt healthy habits that will benefit them, their children, and the nation.

Health and Safety Support

Research data and discussions among participants showed that adolescence is a time whereby an individual's development may be affected either positively or negatively, as a result of biological, psychological, and environmental factors. These factors may make adolescents indulge in risky behaviors such as having unsafe sex, substance use and abuse, which can be carried into young adulthood by the adolescents. According to Joan Grannuci Lesser and Donna Saia Pope, authors of *Human Behavior and the Social Environment Theory and Practice*, "early adulthood represents a period of good health, and young adults have the lowest death rate for all adulthood. However, lifestyle, for example, diet, exercise, drug use and life circumstances may have a significant effect on health. Death from AIDS and accidents pose significant threats to individuals of this age."[72] Thus, this data helped us understand that young adults are typically at a stage in their development when involvement in many risky behaviors begins to reach its peak, and other behaviors begin to decline. Lesser and Pope explain

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[72] Joan Granucci Lesser and Donna Saia Pope, *Human Behavior and the Social Environment: Theory and Practice*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Pearson, 2011), 338.

that many physical capacities, such as strength, endurance, energy level, and sensory

functioning reach their peak in early adulthood and there is increase pattern of maturity

into early adulthood.[73] This might lead into decline in risky behaviors in young adults.

Looking at this further, several analogies were made by *Investing in the Health

and Well-Being of Young Adults*, concerning the present day (21st century) young adults.

According to the authors, as adolescents age into their early and mid-20s, they are less

likely to eat breakfast, exercise, and get regular physical and dental checkups, and more

likely to eat fast food, contract sexually transmitted diseases, smoke cigarettes, and

marijuana and hard drugs and binge drink.[74] It further stated that

> In many years of risky behavior, young adults show a worse health profile
> than both adolescents and older adults. For example, compared with
> adolescents and adults aged 26-34, young adults aged 18-25 are more
> likely to be injured or die in motor vehicle crashes and to have related
> hospitalizations and emergency room visits. Thus young adulthood is
> when many risky behaviors peak but it is also the time when involvement
> in risky behaviors begins to decline.[75]

Also pointed out is that young adulthood is a time of heightened psychological

vulnerability and onset of serious mental health disorders, a problem compounded by

failure to recognize illness or to seek treatment. A contributor from the Institute of

Medicine and National Research Council also stated that "the current generation of young

adults appears to be at the forefront of obesity epidemic and is more vulnerable than

previous generations to obesity-related health."[76] Due to the aforementioned

vulnerabilities, New Wave Care will coordinate with health care institutions to help

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[73] Lesser and Pope, *Human Behavior and the Social Environment*, 337.

[74] Richard J. Bonnie, Clare Stroud, and Heather Breiner, *Investing in the Health and Well-Being of Young Adults* (Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2015), 1.

[75] Ibid.

[76] Ibid.

reduce the dominant pattern of declining health, seen most clearly in health behaviors and related health status among young adults today.

It is recommended that investment opportunities must be a step up in health and clinical preventive services to curb cultural stigmas attached to health care. For example, to the Ghanaian, there is a cultural stigma attached to the concept of mental illness, of being labeled as one who has lost his mind or is delusional. Such derogatory terms associated with it is a cause for dishonor and a deterrent to accessing services in the Ghanaian culture. There is therefore, the need for this transitional enterprise to initiate an integration development program in which a training program is designed to help Ghanaian young adult workers learn a contextual approach to provide effective pastoral care and trained pastoral psychotherapy specialists with "in-depth helping process that attempts to bring fundamental changes in the counselee's personality, spiritual values and ways of thinking,"[77] as well as those portraying the initial signs of unhealthy adaption and emotional distress and crisis. Pastoral action of using social support from family and friends will likely enhance psychological well-being and focus on relief. Such supportive counseling coupled with education relating to learning stress management, talking about their problems in a communal discussion setting, as well as physical activity can be a great solving mechanism that attend to the cultural needs of immigrant Ghanaian youth. As a result of such awareness, Ghanaian youth "may seek medical care for physical symptoms which are often signs of psychological distress, indicating the importance of proactively addressing underlying psychological factors through culturally sensitive

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[77] Collins, *Christian Counseling*, 17.

trauma-focused mental health services."[78] In this regard, efforts will be made through this program designed to prevent and ameliorate the effects of behavioral health problems birthed through cultural and human stereotypes especially that which relates to mood disorders, stress-related dysfunction, and substance use disorders.

Marital and Emotional Support

As the transition to adulthood becomes more protracted (remaining in school longer and marrying and starting their own families late in life) without well-paying skilled, unskilled, or semi-skilled jobs, the increasing family burden may prove costly to the Ghanaian community and society. According to Vincent Schiraldi, Bruce Western, and Kendra Bradner:

> The transition young adulthood has been transformed by the changing structure of the American family. U.S. marriage rates declined from the 1960s through the mid-1900s…Most of the decline in marriage has been concentrated among low-income people with little schooling… Although marriage and parenthood contribute greatly to the structure and routine of the daily life of young men without college education, the economic environment has also become more difficult.[79]

Ultimately, since observational studies (regarding this project) cannot convincingly establish whether single or married young adults are better or worse off, about 65% of young adult participants interviewed are of the view that due to the current economic meltdown, they are beginning to regard marriage and childbearing as more onerous and less rewarding. Divorced young adults in the group discussion who resort to the larger mainstream internet/online dating site for suitable mates (reversing the typical

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[78] Forced Immigration Review, "Being Young and Out of Place," August 2012, http://www.fmreview.org/sites/fmr/files/FMRdownloads/en/young-and-out-of-place.pdf (accessed on October 28, 2017), 31.

[79] Vincent Schiraldi, Bruce Western, and Kendra Bradner, *Community-based Responses To Justice-Involved Young Adults*, (Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice, 2015), 4-5.

temporal pattern of courtship from assessing attraction before suitability) denounce their

parents' insensitivity during the domestic violence ordeal from their male spouses.

Elizabeth Fishel and Dr. Jeffery Jensen Arnett argue that "emerging adults need a

different kind of closeness than when they were young. They need emotional support that

helps boost, not stifle, their confidence in their own coping skills, and they need parents

to bear witness to their increasing capacity to take on responsibilities, even if there are

setbacks or mishaps along the way."[80] Immigrant parents in the group two discussion

group expressed regret for disappointing their young ones. Some argue that because of

job schedules they have not been able to provide emotional and technical support, advice,

and companionship, as well as listening to their young ones talking about challenges to

daily life. Some young adults were quick to point out that such parental silence stem from

Ghanaian culture of patriarchy that favors male spouses against their battered female

spouses. Given the circumstances, immersed in a culture of shame and honor, it is even

deemed a cultural taboo reporting such marital abuse to the police; a similar victimization

their immigrant parents went through leading to divorce.

On the contrary, second-generation Ghanaian young adults born in America, have

no shame in lamenting their covenant failed marriages and its related traumatic

experiences to their constituencies. Walter Brueggemann notes that this "has to do with

loss and insists that loss, deep and broad as it is, can be situated morally in covenant

context."[81] This highlights the driving and potential forces that change family formation

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[80] Sharon Greenthal, "Individuation and Young Adults – What Parents Need to Know," *The Spruce*, April 4, 2017, https://www.thespruce.com/individuation-and-young-adults-4051093 (accessed September 6, 2017).

[81] Walter Brueggemann, *The Practice of Prophetic Imagination: Preaching an Emancipatory Word* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 67.

with which young adults have to grapple. Most young adult couples are forming

households without entering into marriage, forgetting that the theory of the family as

originally developed was a theory of household formation, rather than a theory of legal

marriage.

Why will marriage matter so much to the Ghanaian? Relative to the Ghanaian

culture, marriage may increase shared investment in the child as well as fostering more

resources to distribute to the extended Ghanaian family of husband and wife's siblings.

More so, married parents share a generational stake in their grown children, and may

support one another; thus, have greater emotional reserves to assist grown children.

Having kids in marriage is therefore an honor and asset. Young adults benefiting from

their parents' emotional support doesn't have to take a major toll on parents' time and

energy. Policy analyst Pamela Villarreal warns that "the more boomers put out for adult

kids, the less they can put aside for themselves, which is scary as they live longer and

need savings to last them into their 80s and 90s,"[82] and should be seen as a sacrificial

edifice. Marriage in the Ghanaian cultural setup is seen as an honor, especially when kids

within the marriage excel to their fullest. Divorce and remarriage is seen as a liability,

and in most cases, unacceptable in some religious circles. Therefore, in terms of marriage

prospects, counseling and guides will support their growth in curbing possible driving

forces that have caused changes to the benefits of marriage, considering marriage's

negative impact on young adults today.

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[82] Anna Sutherland, "How Parents Support Their Adult Children," *Institute for Family Studies*, July 15, 2015, https://ifstudies.org/blog/how-parents-support-their-adult-children (accessed on September 6, 2017).

Spiritual Formation (Faith and Spirituality of Youth)

The faith and spirituality of parents is a spiritual investment that positively impacts the lives of children, and many have not realized that "it is a truism that Christian faith and education are inevitable companions. Wherever living faith exits, there is a community endeavoring to know, understand, live, and witness to that faith."[83] These dimensions merge into the years between the ages of 18-22; a time of life often attended by the need for young adults to assume ownership of their faith and chose communities with its mentors capable of nurturing if not challenging their faith. Many of the choices made in spiritual formation shapes the differentiations of the rest of the life span, serving as gateways to future meaning, life style, and mission. Despite identity formation and instability in their life plans, they are optimistic about the future. Therefore, through meaning-making in its most ultimate and intimate dimensions (faith) frequently they explore a variety of possible life directions in love, work, and world views. Most often, such faith exploration minimizes social stress and crisis, eventually, promoting a Christian vision of growth, maturity, and kingdom responsibility.[84] Faith development is "understanding the evolution of how human beings conceptualize God, or a Higher Being, and how the influence of that Higher Being has an impact on core values, beliefs, and meanings in their personal lives and in their relationships with others….that sees its foundational to social relations, to personal identity, and to the making of personal and cultural meanings."[85]

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[83] John H. Westerhoff III, *Will Our Children Have Faith?* 3rd ed. (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 2012), 1.

[84] Setran and Kiesling, *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood*, 1-2.

[85] Eugene C. Roehlkepartain et al., *The Handbook of Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2006), 34, 37.

Many parents and churches are realizing the magnitude of young people's exodus from the church.[86] Apart from parents' failure to pass on their faith and spirituality to their children, emerging young adults often lack purposeful engagement in Christian and other religious formation. For other young adults disrupted by the transitions and distractions in their life, was their parents' divorce and custody battles; while for others it was the tendency to engage in risky behavior, binge drinking and drug abuse. Many point to their sexually permissive and promiscuous relationships, evidenced by a culture that promotes personal gratification. Some of these young adults born in America view this stage of life as set apart for pleasure and personal exploration; a lifestyle that "identify a pervasive pattern of individualism, a primary reliance on what Smith has labeled the 'sovereign self',"[87] exploited by the consumerism of the American culture and burdened by consumer debt, as they become hostages to life-style choices.

Some young adult participants in group two lamented how since their childhood they have been living in an increasingly religiously multicolored world, although they were born into Christian homes, where Sunday church attendance is a norm. Yet, they wander and wonder without discovering a community of practice that has staying power, capable of transforming their lives. Ironically, four young adult participants in the first group dispelled faith communities that provide practice and discipline as well as easy answers that cannot be questioned. Though this kind of faith community could be attractive, it does not invite critical inquiry. They believe young adults should have the opportunity to explore religious/spiritual traditions in ways that tolerate, and also

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[86] Kara E. Powell and Chap Clark, *Sticky Faith: Everyday Ideas to Build Lasting Faith in Your Kids* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 15.

[87] Setran and Kiesling, *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood*, 5.

welcome, big questions for critical inquiry. This in their opinion, will encourage a more adequate understanding through which one's experiential faith can be composed and "help emerging adults catch a vision for true spiritual maturation, one that is rooted in the gospel and penetrates to the depths of the heart, rather than mere external observance."[88] At best, the New Wave Care Faith and Spirituality program will offer such practical theology of spiritual formation, which will translate into a golden opportunity for young adults' expression of spirituality in relation to self, others, and God.

Opportunities for Young Adults

Land Location and Program Facilities

Figure 3 A View of Prayer Watch Land Structure at Williamstown, in the Town of Amboy, Oswego County, New York

Site Date and Existing Structures: The subject property earmarked for Prayer Watch New Wave Care Transitional Living Facility is known as Lot 1 to Lot 15 in the Town of Amboy, Oswego County New York. This referenced parcel of land encompasses approximately 424.93 acres. Lot 2 to Lot 15 exist between NYS Route 183 and Keppy Carr Road and the remaining parcel Lot 1 (3.8 acre) is located off NYS Route

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[88] Ibid., 27.

183 directly opposite to Lot 2. Access to the site is provided via Smith Drive (a gravel cul-de-sac) off NYS Route 183. The property is presently occupied by a Church/Fellowship building, a meeting hall, a two-story residential house and a detached bath house all on Lot 7 (50.7 acres). The site (Lot 7) is presently partially cleared with small trees along the north and south property boundary. Several evergreen trees also exist throughout the remaining lots and "native plants are adapted to the natural hydrology, climate, and geography of the region and have evolved in relation to other local plants. This allows native plants to provide habitat for local species."[89] The site has a stream (Rowell Brook) which runs along the west of Lot 9 and Lot 8 approximately 5,400 feet into the New York State Restoration.

Figure 4 Prayer Watch Temple Existing Structures/Facilities at
Williamstown in the Town of Amboy, Oswego County, New York

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[89] Cullen Howe and Michael Gerrard, eds., *The Law of Green Buildings: Regulatory and Legal Issues in Design, Construction, Operations, and Financing* (Chicago: American Bar Association, 2011), 10.

Vegetation and Wildlife: The site (Lot 7) is at present partially cleared with small trees along the north and south property boundary. Several evergreen trees also exist throughout the remaining lots. A walk through the property and a review of the soil survey has shown that no wetlands exist on the site and there are no recorded threatened or endangered species on the property. Due to little existing vegetation, there will be minimal negative impact to the existing wildlife living on site and around the property. The proposed development will be designed to include ground vegetation, landscaping, and trees which upon their establishment will become habitable by local bird species, small mammals, and amphibians.

Surface Water: The site is credited with a stream (Rowell Brook) which runs along the west of Lot 9 and Lot 8 approximately 5,400 feet into the New York State Restoration. The stream serves as a recreational fishing base for the neighborhood residents during the summer months. The stream water is clear and odorless and exhibits uniform flow along existing site slopes from east to west which enhances high level of dissolved oxygen (DO), low level of biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) and self-purification of natural waters.[90]

Existing Site Grading and Characteristics: The partially developed property (Lot 7) slopes moderately 3.75% eastwards and 3% westwards from the 2-story house. Surface runoff due to direct precipitation of high or low intensity is directed away from the existing structures resulting in a positive drainage. No evidence of soil erosion observed on the site due to presence of vegetation cover and moderate terrain. Since the

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[90] Terence J. McGhee, *Water Supply and Sewerage*, 6th ed., 2 vols. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2007), 1656.

impervious cover is <1%, a majority of existing storm water runoff is expected to infiltrate into the soil to recharge the groundwater.[91]

Geology and Soils: No geological or rock outcrops have been observed at the referenced site. A review of the Oswego County Soil Survey indicates that the property is underlain by soil classified as Adams Series which consists of deep, excessively drained coarse textured soils.[92] The seasonal high-water table is generally at a depth of more than 6 feet. Permeability is rapid in the subsoil and very rapid in the substratum and aquifers in this soil are generally good sources of groundwater.

Mitigation of Unavoidable Adverse Environment Impacts: Since the site is partially developed, additional development of the property should result in minimal detrimental impacts to the environment. Detrimental impacts will mainly include the loss of existing trees/shrubbery, increase impervious areas and increased storm water runoff. Although, the previously detrimental impact will occur, the proposed development will be designed to provide additional habitat for bird species, small mammals, and small amphibians through the planting of strategically placed landscaping. The development also will be designed to enhance water quality and reduce the rate of storm water runoff from the site. Based upon this, the negative environmental impacts from development of the site should be temporary in nature.

Flood Hazard: Per the flood insurance rate map available online provided by Flood partners, community panel number 36075C039G effective 6/15/2013 prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency - The site lies in Flood Zone "X"-areas of

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[91] Michael R. Lindeburg, *Civil Engineering Reference Manual for the PE Exam*, 8th ed. (Belmont, CA: Professional Publications, 2001), 2-17.

[92] United States Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service, *Soil Survey of Oswego County,* https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_MANUSCRIPTS/new_york/NY075/0/oswego.pdf, 17.

minimal flooding and "during rainfall events, billions of gallons of water flow into…municipalities….sewer systems…equipped with combined sewer overflows (CSOs), which act as safety valves and deposit much of this water, which contains raw sewage, and other contaminants, into waterways."[93]

Noise and Air Pollution: Environmental pollution to be generated from the site will be typical to small mixed-use developments. The site presently generates no air and sound pollution; however, noise pollution will increase temporarily during the construction phase of the project due to construction equipment and delivery trucks, pollution will slightly increase from the heating system (natural gas heating system). In addition, air pollution from dust from construction operations and soil excavation as well as vehicles traversing the site during and after construction is completed will also contribute to a slight increase in air pollution values. There will be no coal, fuel, oil, gasoline, diesel, wood, or other combustible material to be burned. State or Federal emission permits will be required for this project.

Energy: The project will consume energy in two phases, construction and use. All proposed energy is assumed to be typical of a residential type use. In the construction phase, electricity and petroleum based fuels will be used to power construction equipment, vehicles, and tools. During the project's usable life, the site will utilize gasoline used by cars, electricity for lighting and climate control and either oil, electricity, or natural gas for heat.

The project, when completed, will provide ground vegetation and environmental trees which will be used for traditional indoor/outdoor Ghanaian games such as "Oware,"

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[93] Howe and Gerrard, eds., *The Law of Green Buildings*, 8.

"Nte," "Ludo," "Dame," "Chess," "Playing Cards," etc. by young adults. A majority of these games are played by two or more people, while other games will attract several players, spectators, and prospective competitors, who will be waiting for their turn to play. Those games that will be played outdoors, specifically, under specially planted trees that have been integrated into the site design plan. More significant is the creation of athletic fields, one designated for soccer, football, rugby, and lacrosse, including miscellaneous activities. The other is baseball fields which include softball and kickball. Studios designed for dance classes for those who will enjoy it, and a community park with benches perfect for get-togethers and barbecues, as well as a library for studying. Also, creating a community garden where young adults can learn cultivating fruits and vegetables from scratch.

The presence of the environmental trees and ground vegetation will prohibit deforestation. Soil in deforested areas is exposed to more sunlight, which increases the soil temperature and oxidizes the carbon in the soil to carbon dioxide. Some of the carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere comes from dead vegetation that decomposes in the ground. In heavily deforested areas, soil erosion and nutrient runoff are common after a rainfall. Soil erosion tends to be greater in drier, more mountainous areas, where there is less vegetation to prevent the movement of soil and to absorb the nutrients. Deforestation also affects nearby rivers, streams, and other water sources as nutrients from the soil are removed through leaching, which happens when water (e.g., from rain) removes soluble nutrients from the soil and carries them elsewhere.[94]

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[94] Bobby Whitescarver, "Leaves from Native Trees – Foundation of Freshwater Ecosystems," *Whitescarver Blog*, January 21, 2015, https://www.gettingmoreontheground.com/2015/01/21/leaves-native-trees-foundation-freshwater-ecosystems (accessed December 12, 2017).

Water sources in deforested areas were shown to have higher nitrate levels, lower dissolved oxygen levels, and somewhat higher temperatures (from 20 to 23 degrees Celsius on average) than in forested areas. Water temperatures increase because the trees that provide cover from sunlight are cut down. All of these factors disrupt a river ecosystem because the species that live in the stream have adapted to conditions before the deforestation and may be negatively impacted by the sudden changes streamside, native forests provide many ecosystem services such as stabilizing stream banks, shade to cool the water in the stream, habitat for wildlife and carbon sequestration but perhaps the most profound and the one often overlooked is that the leaves from our native trees, when they fall into the stream become the foundation of the aquatic food chain. A healthy aquatic ecosystem is capable of processing 2 to 8 times more pollution than a stream flowing through non-forested streamsides.[95] Based on the above findings, it is imperative that the proposed environmental trees will help maintain the ecosystem and improve the water quality of Rowell Brook.

Water run-off and erosion can be caused by climate change, the growing of plants and trees can, therefore, help to reduce run-off and erosion by breaking the force of rain and/or run-off from uphill, thereby reducing the possibility of floods. It has been reported by the USDA that 100 mature trees can reduce runoff caused by rainfall by up to 100,000 gallons. Also, trees can be used to cool homes in hot weather conditions, eliminating or reducing the use of cooling energy, thus making it a good energy management measure. According to the Arbor Day Foundation, the overall effect of the shade created by planting a "healthy tree is equivalent to ten room-size air conditioners running 20 hours a

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[95] McGhee, *Water Supply and Sewerage*.

day."[96] Furthermore, the trees can act as a barrier between proposed buildings and the environment, preventing air from infiltrating buildings, thereby saving heating and energy costs during the cold seasons. The *Journal of Horticulture* states that as much as 25 percent of heating costs can be saved using trees.[97]

Provision of a health and undisturbed terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems will result in attaining equilibrium where very few major changes in climate will be observed over a long period of time.[98]

Proposed Development: The Board of Trustees of Prayer Watch Ministries in conjunction with New Wave Care proposes to construct a multipurpose facility for the marginalized young adults between the ages of 18 years to 22 years who have gone wayward due to poor parenting, peer pressure, drug/alcohol addiction and high school drop outs. The proposed development will be constructed on Lots 7 and 8 and will include a public library, recreational/TV room, gymnasium, dining facility, dormitories, for the transition living program.

The New Wave Care transitional living project includes residential facilities and programs uniquely tailored to the marginalized young adult population that "relates to real life situations because it comes from and draws on real life situations."[99] The components for the residential facility will be residential providers, my staff, educators/caregivers/ volunteers, medical staff, etc. serving the young adults during their

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[96] Arbor Day Foundation, "Benefits of Trees," https://www.arborday.org/trees/benefits.cfm (accessed on September 6, 2017).

[97] Scott Auerbach, "Deforestation Effects on Ecosystems," https://sciencing.com/deforestation-effects-ecosystems-8845.html (accessed April 24, 2017).

[98] Ibid.

[99] Luke A. Powery, *Dem Dry Bones: Preaching, Death, and Hope* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 113-114.

quarterly 12-week programs. Since the current focus is on Ghanaian marginalized young

adults' transformation, due to risky behavioral backgrounds, New Wave Care believes

that no more than two girls or two boys should share a room, a model similar to domestic

violence shelters.[100] Participants advocated for at least a 12 weeks minimum length of

stay at the New Wave Care facility, as sufficient time to build trust with young adults,

provide the necessary help to address their hopeless situation, and rebuild their lives.

"This suggests that Christian hope is not hope without death because Hope rises out of an

open grave."[101] After the young adults leave, participants advocated a continued

connection to the program and long-term after-care services.

Furthermore, in relation to the voluntary stay, young adults need to make the

choice for themselves and the program needs to be able to hold a space open for someone

to come back. An integrated program that doesn't institutionalize, but a whole new model

program sited outside of an urban environment is better able to begin recovery away from

the daily triggers of urban noise.

The security measures to put in place at New Wave Care residential facility

include, security cameras and state-of-the-art alarm systems; 24-hour staffing and the

presence of security guards, limited phone use, supervised access to the internet, locked

doors at all times with staff and residents buzzed in and out of the facility being very

important for participants' safety. Additionally, safety plans for each resident will be

adopted to address unexpected challenging issues. Most young adults' abusive

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[100] Laurence C. Novotney, Elizabeth Mertinko, James Lange, and Tara Kelly Baker, "Juvenile Mentoring Program: A Progress Review," U.S. Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, September 2000, https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/182209.pdf (accessed on October 20, 2017), 24.

[101] Powery, *Dem Dry Bones*, 132-133.

backgrounds require staff to be real, use a lot of humor, and be able to compassionately

confront their behaviors without judgment. Staff will be culturally competent –

knowledgeable above the culture of the street. The New Wave Care will make it possible

for this group of young adults to be attended to by staff who truly understands where they

have been, either by being a victim themselves or immersing oneself in the culture,

language, and experience. The staff will have extensive training to meet realities of the

young adults' life situations for them to recognize that their lives are rooted in purpose

and providence "for a reason, there are no extra parts."[102]

The range of services that needs to be available to young adults includes:

- Basic needs, e.g. food, temporary shelter, shower; and a safe place to sleep.

- Mental health counseling, medical routine care, life skills and job training
  programs, educational programming and family involvement/unification.

Among other things, the objective of the program is to teach the young adults how

to value themselves. There is not a "one size fits all" model to serving these marginalized

young adults. Different levels and types of care will be stepped up to ensure long-term

growth stability and exit. At minimum, this program will be adequately funded as the

future safety and stability of these vulnerable young adults' population rests on our

ability to provide a safe haven or a "home" for them. This will enable them to recover

from the trauma of their neglect and be given a chance at a new life, free from

exploitation.

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[102] Setran and Kiesling, *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood*, 137.

Love and close relationships with caring program educators

Studies have shown in the past few decades that as social beings, humans have powerful ways to feel attached to one another. Our human connections bind our infanthood to our biological parents/caregivers and enhance our growth. Years and decades of young adult neglect and abandonment demand that New Wave Care program assist them to develop close bonds with many caregivers to be able to explore, learn, and develop their identity and relate well with others. In a nutshell, the essential task and foundational component of my program educators will be to build positive loving relationships that help the disadvantaged young adults know they are valued/important; thereby increasing their self-esteem and confidence to venture out to explore their dream world. Erik H. Erikson explains that "this self-esteem grows to be a conviction that one is learning effective steps toward a tangible future, and is developing into a defined self within a social reality."[103] Therefore, one of the cardinal purposes of the transitional living program is for young adults to feel a sense of belonging, connected with others and the community in enduring close relationships.

This will involve utilizing a relationship building model that creates a social competence through which young adults will thrive in the context of close, dependable relationships that provide love and nurturance, security, and responsive interactions. Daniel L. Migliore notes that "God loves in freedom, lives in communion, and wills creatures to live in a new community of mutual love and service. God is self-sharing, other-regarding, community-forming love."[104] This is reminiscent of the traditional

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[103] Erik H. Erikson, *Childhood and Society* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1993), 235.

[104] Daniel L. Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2004), 73.

Ghanaian system of "Nnoboa" (cooperative assistance). Individual identity will be influenced by their sense of group identity as they develop loving affiliation with each other in a social club fashion. Such Ghanaian social ethical paradigm of "Wo ahyia wo nua" (meaning you have met your liking) will endear young adults to participate in varied activities to develop knowledge of self and others. This will allow them to develop a sense of stimulating authenticity from the knowledge that his/her individual way of learning experiences is a successful alternative way of group identity he/she immersed themselves and is in accord with his/her purpose and plan for life. Program educators will therefore invest time with young adults as a precedent to reduce many challenging behaviors. Essentially, getting to know participants through building meaningful positive relationships is meant to help program educators gain a thorough understanding of the young adults' preferences; interest, trust, background, and tribal affiliation or culture. With this information, program educators can ensure that the content of their teaching/conversations is relevant to the needs of the young adults.

Since it takes a lot to love, the program will be structured in a way that volunteers/educators will be called upon to devote extensive effort so as to achieve a high level of intervention intensity in the relationship building. Particularly helpful is a metaphor for building positive relationships with that of the Ghanaian "Susu" (deposit) bank. The Ghanaian "Susu Bank" is a local system of banking in which the lone banker visits market stalls each day for individual traders to make their deposits to the "Susu Bank." Customers will then do monthly or yearly withdrawals after interest payment is made to the lone banker. Similarly, volunteers/caregivers will engage in "New Wave Care" model strategies to build caring relationships, as if they are "making a

caring/loving deposit" in the young adults "Susu Bank." When young adults' risky behavior makes demands and educators/volunteers criticized, it is as if they are making a relationship withdrawal. For some young adults, because there has been no prior effort to make love deposits in their relationship "Susu Bank," nagging, criticism, and demands may be more akin to writing bad checks. According to Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "if, because of love for our kindred, we are obliged to offer our goods, our honor, and our life, then in the same way we are obliged to offer them for our enemies."[105] Likewise, making deposits in a relationship bank or withdrawals from the bank will be a helpful interaction and renewed commitment for me to work extra hard to proactively build a positive relationship with the young adults.

New Wave Care educators/volunteers' love and caring relationship can speed the process of relationship building by self-monitoring one's own deposits and withdrawal behaviors and setting behavioral goals accordingly. Apart from what young adults get out of positive relationships with caring educators and volunteers, harmoniously, educators will feel more positive about their skills, their efforts, and get something valuable out of time and attention we expend to build these meaningful relationships too. And more importantly, as these marginalized young adults learn in the context of love and caring relationships with educators/caregivers, they will become more skilled at building positive relationships with other young adults and promote healthy self-esteem, identity, as well as development of critical thinking. Above all, providing young adults with the opportunity to have a warm and responsive relationship with me and other educators

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[105] Bonhoeffer, *Discipleship*, 139-140.

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means that we will have the pleasure of getting to know the young adults as well in our

effort to help in their transformation.

Building Moral and Character Education against Risky Behavior (e.g. drug addiction, gang activity)

High youth incarceration rates from research data collected portrays the

development of wide range of specific youth problems (namely substance abuse, conduct

disorders, delinquent and anti-social behavior, academic failure, teenage pregnancy, etc.),

and its prevention strategies that seems to fail in America. Joan Petersilia posits that:

> We now have more than 2 million citizens incarcerated in prisons and jails
> on any one day, including fully a third of all young black men living in the
> United States. In some inner cities, more than half the male residents have
> been incarcerated. Prisons have become vast learning centers for crime
> and are magnifying the social problems these communities face. Common
> sense suggests that many prisoners return home more desperate, more
> violence-prone, and more of a menace to society. The multiplier effect is
> certain to exact a staggering, but as yet unmeasured, future toll.[106]

Confronted with early failures, Richard F. Catalano, David J. Hawkins, and John

W. Toumbourou argue that prevention program developers understood the science of

behavior development and change. Therefore, to address predicators of specific problem

behaviors identified in longitudinal and intervention studies of youth, they began

designing program elements.[107] This means the promotion of youth's social, emotional,

cognitive, and moral development will be seen as key to preventing problem behaviors.[108]

In this regard, character and moral development programs, apart from enhancing the

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[106] Joan Petersilia, *When Prisoners Come Home: Parole and Prisoner Reentry* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 247.

[107] Richard F. Catalano, David J. Hawkins, and John W. Toumbourou, "Positive Youth Development in the United States: History, Efficacy, and Links to Moral and Character Education," in *Handbook of Moral and Character Education*, 2nd ed., ed. Larry Nucci, Darcia Narvaez, and Tobias Krettenauer, 223-240 (New York: Routledge, 2008).

[108] Ibid, 460.

efficacy of existing models, will seek to encourage moral reasoning and ethical standards of conduct with the hope of preventing young adult involvement in problem behaviors. Particularly, elements of this development program principles will serve as guide to their future actions, in ensuring that its positive outcomes through teaching, social, emotional, and cognitive competencies; provides opportunities for prosocial involvement; and fostering bonding.[109] In a similar vein, "Bewlby hypothesized that an attachment bond is created between an infant and a primary caregiver that provides the child both a sense of security and a safe haven from which to explore."[110]

Beyond the family is the importance of quality bonding in which these transitional living program caregivers will bond to young adults to foster patterns that will protect young adults from adopting problem behaviors in the face of risk.[111] Such capacity for adapting to change in healthy ways will help young adults to use patterns of interpersonal skills learned, integrate feelings, thinking, and actions, in order to achieve specific social decisions and interpersonal goals that translates into effective behavior.[112] Among other things, these development program construct could cover areas of youth functioning such as cognitive skills, life satisfaction, strength of character, behavioral competencies that foster resilience, self-determination, spirituality, clear and positive identity, belief in the future, fueled by a desire to enhance positive development in order to reduce young adults' problems.[113] Quarterly reviews will be made to evaluate/measure the percentage

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[109] Ibid, 462.

[110] Setran and Kiesling, *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood*, 187.

[111] Catalano et al., "Positive Youth Development in the United States: History, Efficacy, and Links to Moral and Character Education," 461.

[112] Ibid., 462.

[113] Ibid., 463.

of effective programs that have shown positive changes in young adult behaviors, including significant improvements in interpersonal skills, quality of adult relationships, self-control, problem-solving, self-efficacy, commitment to schooling and academic achievement, with the view to ensuring quality and consistency of program implementation. The New Wave Care program component will entail an increased sense of responsibility to care for delinquent young adults with the goal of producing significant positive effects on these young adults' behavioral outcomes.

Resource Inputs

Mentoring and Supervision

"Young people need to be shown their future is not dictated by their past. Positive role-models including individuals who have faced similar adversity and are now living happy, positive lives are also critical."[114] As the challenges facing at-risk Ghanaian young adults grow, enthusiasm for supportive relationship, guidance, and concrete assistance become paramount to younger adults as they go through a difficult period. Formal and informal mentoring has been used for many years to support positive youth development;[115] the framework within which this program mentorship should operate will be based on Ghanaian cultural setting known as "Agyabi wu agyabi tease" (idiomatic expression in the Akan language which literally means "If a father dies, another father lives") —implying that the loss of a (blood) father does not connote the end of that figurehead in one's life. All is not lost, there is hope because there is someone willing and prepared to be a father to the bereaved kids to lessen challenges in their life endeavors. When one door closes, another door opens. Even if you lose an important person in your

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[114] Forced Immigration Review, "Being Young and Out of Place," 32.

[115] Novotney et al., "Juvenile Mentoring Program," 4.

life forever, be assured there is another one who is an "alive-mediator mentor" out there to care for you.

The New York "project" building system for low-income people has helped solidify the Ghanaian communal family system with its "we feelings" for one another in such residential facilities. All five boroughs of New York City boast of Ghanaian clans and tribes, located in project buildings such as Tracy Towers, River Park Towers in the Bronx, and Lefrak City in Queens, to mention a few. A fundamental aspect of "the Go-Mediator Mentoring Program" will match young adults with compatible mentors from the same (or similar) cultural background, so that mutually satisfying relationships can be developed. Communal spirit among Ghanaians concentrated in such project locations could help to recruit mentors from the Ghanaian ethnic community for "unity can be cultivated from the uniqueness of cultural diversity when it is suitably, philosophically harnessed."[116] As the young adults enroll in the program it will help more specifically to determine the types of matches that can provide a positive experience for young adults and mentors. Since most Ghanaian church membership constitute family clan and tribal affiliations, well-educated volunteer mentors with specialized backgrounds will be recruited within church communities and used as intervention educators to help young adults.

Recruitment of mentors will be geared towards not only supporting meaningful young adults' development, but also effect progress towards the New Wave Care goals, namely, reduction in school dropout rates, reduction in delinquency and gang involvement, improvement in academic performance, and prevention from engaging in

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[116] Ayim, *The Akan of Ghana*, 4.

risky behaviors in the future. New Wave Care mentors will have access to our database

evaluation of risk domains of male and female young adults. This will play an important

role in expanding the body of information about mentoring. Risk domain, both male and

female, will be determined by the percentage of enrolled young adult such as:

(1) School/college problems.
    a. School behavior.
    b. Poor grades.
    c. Truancy.
(2) Social/Family Problems
    a. Domestic violence and family feud.
    b. Funeral conflicts.
    c. Getting along with family.
(3) Delinquency
    a. Fighting
    b. Property rights and crime.
    c. Gang activity.
    d. Weapons (not using knives and gangs).
    e. Avoiding friends who start trouble.
(4) Alcohol ("apeteshie"), Drug, and Tobacco Use.
    a. Staying away from Ghanaian local gin "apeteshie" and all kinds of drugs.
(5) Pregnancy/Early Parenting.[117]

Results of such data collection will be summarized in New Wave Care Bulletin

and made available to the mentors and educators involved in the program.

The methodology or various strategies that New Wave Care will employ to

enhance mentor recruitment will include forming a partnership with the community

business entities and other established organizations. The "Alive-Mediator Mentorship

Program" will recruit mentors who "have themselves faced many of the same obstacles

that the young immigrant youth are encountering. Even more importantly, the adults are

living examples to the younger generation that there are ways to successfully bridge two

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[117] Novotney et al., "Juvenile Mentoring Program," 5.

seemingly differing cultures."[118] In such instances, this will be accompanied by a sense of shared experience with the young adults, since some mentors may even grow up in the same neighborhood under similar circumstances. The Alive-Mediator mentor also plays an important role in being able to communicate with the parents in their Ghanaian native language. This puts parents at ease and offers an opportunity to help them become better connected to resources in the larger community.[119] One social worker personnel in one of the Ghanaian immigrant communities, who had volunteered to be a mentor in this program, reported that currently, she had children living at home and felt that mentoring will help her better understand and relate to her children. While another volunteer said that he had grown-up children and wanted an opportunity to spend time with other young people. The Alive-Mediator Mentorship program is critical to young adults' ability to develop and function accordingly, as they need direction, to define their own lives, identities, and destinies.

Educational Attainment and Social Skills

Educational Attainment: Economically, "education pays!"[120] As a result, the New Wave program will focus on motivating the young adults to have a learning/performance orientation that can develop a growth mindset, leading to increased academic achievement and economic benefit. Stephanie Potochnick explains that "motivated by their parents' sacrifices to come to the US, children of immigrants—both

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[118] Forced Immigration Review, "Being Young and Out of Place," 32.

[119] Ibid.

[120] James C. Harden III, *Think Like a Teacher, Act Like a Parent: Using the Power of Education to Increase Your Child's Life Opportunities* (San Bernardino, CA: Harden & Harden, 2014), 3.

documented and undocumented—strongly value education and believe educational attainment will ensure their own future economic success."[121]

A Ghanaian Akan learning strategy of "Sankosua" (learning again) which allows the youth to understand their own thinking, improve perception of ability to develop their skills, expectations of success and the extent to which they value an activity, especially low-attaining young adults in the program. Particularly, in non-academic domains, students will be motivated to transfer learning strategies from one context to another. Key skills that are inter-related will be developed in combination with each other as a long-term outcome. Under "Sankosua" learning technique, certain activities like "kente" weaving (traditional multiple Ghanaian cloth), can enhance young adults' attitudes/behaviors of patience, self-control, perseverance, while at the same time promoting young adults' leadership skills, coping skills, and engagement in the community. This brings into focus our service learning programs that will connect community volunteering to classroom integrative learning of the young adults, which has positive effects on a variety of outcomes, including attitudes towards oneself, learning, civic engagement, and academic performance. Special attention will be given to the construct of positive self-perceptions of how young adults feel about their past performance and measuring expectations about their future performance that influence future effort and achievement, as well as improving their social skills.

In the absence of adequate social skills, it will be very difficult for transition young adults to achieve the best outcomes possible in specific skills areas such as job

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[121] Stephanie Potochnick, "How States Can Reduce the Dropout Rate for Undocumented Immigrant Youth: The Effects of In-State Resident Tuition Policies," *Social Science Research* 45 (May 2014): 18–32.

skills, literacy, and independent living, which are basic themes in both the two participating groups. While mentoring will effectively prevent a variety of problems, young adults will need to be equipped with effective social problem-solving skills which will require them to read one's own and others' feelings, and be able to accurately express those feelings.

Based on the Twi accolade "Suanaye" (learn to practice), teaching social skills to transition young adults will be done through role playing and observation so as to engage young adults' interest to take on roles that provide opportunities for practice and feedback. The "Suanaye" (learn to practice) teaching technique will inculcate in the young adults to practice brief responses for greetings and farewells. For instance, "How are you doing?" An appropriate response is "Fine" or "Great" can be helpful in getting off to a good start in a new workplace or school environment. Another learning tool of social skills such as being on time, checking one's own understanding and asking appropriate questions, initiating, and responding to humor, as well as building on others' comments and ideas will be incorporated into the program. At best, teaching social skills for cooperative learning (criticizing ideas, not people) and work environment (e.g. giving and responding to instructions) will be given to help transition young adults in five dimensions in relation to: "(a) peer relational skills, (b) self-management skills, (c) academic skills, (d) compliance skills, and (e) assertion skills."[122] "Such skills are aspects of social and emotional learning."[123] In a sense, well developed social skills will assist young adults with delinquent behavior to develop strong cordial relationships, succeed in

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[122] Christine D. Brener and John Smith, "Teaching Social Skills," *Information Brief: Addressing Trends and Developments in Secondary Education and Transition* 3, no. 5 (October 2004): 1-5, http://www.ncset.org/publications/viewdesc.asp?id=1749 (accessed September 18, 2017).

[123] Ibid.

any academic endeavor, and begin to successfully explore adult roles as well as develop healthy adult relationships with family members and peers.

The Ghanaian culture of shame and honor has held strong clues for how young adults with social skills, like cooperation, listening to others, and helping classmates are far better predictors of future success than academic ones. Invariably, social skills learning will improve young adults' communication with peers and adults, improve cooperative teamwork, and help them become effective, caring, concerned members of their communities, while "allowing learners to personalize content by using their imagination."[124] Further, the New Wave Care program will give young adults insights on how to set and achieve individual goals and persistent, skills that are important for their fruitful development into adulthood, life work, and financial stability. "A wise person once said, 'money is not everything, but it certainly has a way of easing your nerves!' For most of us, increased education leads to increased salary."[125] Certain steps will be taken to create a positive transitional program atmosphere by holding daily classroom meetings, each morning program session to help build community relationships that provides opportunities, feedback regarding their experiences, with the aim of providing an environment in which all students are valued and respected.

Computer Literacy Program and Job Attainment Skills

Most disadvantaged immigrant young adult participants in group one have not attained any computer literacy capability, connecting them to opportunities to build skills and gain work experience. Computers encompass almost all facets of human endeavors

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[124] Paul D. Eggen and Donald P. Kauchak, *Strategies and Models for Teachers: Teaching Content and Thinking Skills*, 6th ed. (Boston: Pearson, 2012), 49.

[125] Harden, *Think Like a Teacher*, 3.

and are increasingly shaping our way of life especially among young adults. The need for computer literacy has never been more significant in our society today. Every task we undertake, every transaction occurring, every bit of information stored is somehow connected to the internet. In this era, computer literacy is proving to be an essential asset— knowledge required for our competency in the socioeconomic world. Schools are embracing computer literacy as an essential skill for participants.

Programs that teach job readiness and attainment skills will be put in place to encourage career exploration, decrease youth unemployment, and improve self-confidence. Consequently, as we are slowly moving into the digital era many things are being transformed. For example, books located in the library or online in a computerized database and accessing them requires a computer and the internet. These days, doctors are utilizing computers to store patient's information and accessing these bits of information instantly when the need arises. Doctors are not only able to do their jobs well but have also become effective and responsive in critical situations. Every aspect of a business or a profession is affected by the need for computers. The point is this, no matter where you find employment, there is a good chance a computer will be a basic tool you will have to use and those with computer knowledge will likely be successful.[126] Computers, along with the internet, are slowly creeping into the human fabric and every day its profound impact is felt in our lives; the need for having some basic knowledge about how these devices function has been great.

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[126] Nancy Giguere, "Education for Life: Computer Literacy Required in the Workplace," *Star Tribune*, Nov. 1, 2010, www.startribune.com/education-for-life-computer-literacy-required-in-the-workplace/105903808/?_ga=2.155381819.1077884304.1507845067-1018656361.1507845066&c=y&page=all&prepage=1#continue (accessed October 10, 2017).

With many opportunities, young adults' lack of computer skills only decapitates their ability to see what is ahead and be prepared for such opportunities. As part of the programs New Wave Care is implementing with the young adults, we are creating a computer literacy program where those with disadvantaged background will be presented with the opportunity to learn and also become part of the social order where computer skills are the big thing in a rapidly changing economy. Below are the nuts and bolts of the program.

Detailed Computer Training Program

The basic computer literacy program will be designed to provide young adults the opportunity to be competitive in a dominant technological world and be exposed to the basic knowledge of computing; thereby becoming knowledgeable in the area of computer principles, hardware and software including Microsoft Office, Excel and Access; yet providing a safe environment that "requires an in-depth understanding of the types and prevalence of online risks young internet users face, as well as of the solutions most effective in mitigating these risks."[127]

Introductory Programs

- **Creating and checking email**

    The most important element that emerged from the technological era was the advent of email, which is so crucial in an ever-changing world. Most communication is likely to be in the form of email. So being knowledgeable in this area will be crucial step towards knowing how to navigate through the technological world.

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[127] Adina Farrukh, Rebecca Sadwick, and John Villasenor, "Youth Internet Safety: Risks, Responses, and Research Recommendations," Center for Technology Innovation at Brookings, http://www. brookings.edu/~/media/research/files/papers/2014/10/21-youth-internetsafety-farrukh-sadwick-villasenor/youth-internet-safety_v07. pdf, 1.

Duration: The program is expected to take about 6 months (first half of the year-12 weeks and second half of the year-12 weeks) for completion.

Accomplishment: Participants will be introduced to the various email programs available like Gmail, Hotmail, and Yahoo. These are the popular email platforms utilized by the general public at large. The participants will also learn how to check and read an email, compose an email, add attachments, locate, and file and many other features. At the end of the program, the participants of New Wave Care program are expected to know how to open an email program, compose a message and know the various features of basic email program.

- **Microsoft Suite Software**

    Microsoft Suite is the foundation software of the Windows operating system. From the smallest organizations to the largest organizations, Microsoft Office suite is at the core of the business and its functionality. The significance of having some knowledge about Office suite cannot be underestimated as it has become a productivity tool in most businesses.[128] This is a must-have skill if the young adults will have the chance of working in a business environment. Participants will learn about the core office programs like Word, Excel and PowerPoint.

Duration: The duration of the program is expected to last about 6 months.

Accomplishment: Structurally, it requires effort and time to learn about the various features of the program. Participants will learn how to:

o   Work with texts

o   Layout and Printing

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[128] Elaine Marmel, *Office 2016 Simplified* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2016).

- o Working with objects

- o Collaborating and Reviewing

- o Creating and opening Documents

- o Saving and Sharing Documents

At the end of the program the participants are expected to know how to open a Word document, edit a text or compose, save a document, share documents, save and print a document and many other things that can be done with not just Word but Excel and PowerPoint. More importantly, they will be given insights to "many approaches to mitigating online risks faced by youth focus on risk management through education and monitoring."[129]

- **Browsing the web**

    Browsing is one of the major activities of young adults on the web and safeguard youth from online risk including "monitoring youth through online technologies and software, or in-person supervision and educating youth about potential risks."[130] Some activities of browsing include shopping, checking a flight, booking a ticket, listening to music or streaming movies. While browsing does not seem like an activity that requires a special skill, being knowledgeable in some aspect of browsing will be significant. Participants in this program will learn about the various ways to browse safely and have the opportunity to learn about how to search for jobs online; to fill out applications for jobs, and how to request information regarding a particular job. All these skillsets are relevant in the digital world.

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[129] Farrukh, Sadwick, and Villasenor, "Youth Internet Safety," 9.

[130] Ibid., 7.

Duration: The program is expected to last about 4 weeks.

Accomplishment: Participants will have the opportunity to learn about the various web browsers and its functionality. Browsing safely measures will be implemented to ensure participants are not browsing illegally. Given the risky behavioral background of some of the participants, precaution will be instituted to ensure safe browsing. The participants are expected to be familiar with the different web browsing and its functionality.

- **Components of computer**

    Understanding how computer works is an important skill that is required in a rapidly changing world where computers are at the core of everything we undertake. Each of the components is necessary for the full function of the computer.[131] And it will prepare them to be well-equipped to live in a technological world.

    Duration: This program will last about 6 months to 1 year.

    Accomplishment: The participants will learn about the various components that function together to ensure computers are effectively working.

- **Resume workshop**

    The Resume workshop will focus on helping the participants understand how to write an outstanding resume including how to format and knowing the right contents to have on the resume. Many employers are using the computer in the resume selection, therefore having the correct words is important as the selection is based on the words on how the computer is fed.

    Duration: This program is expected to last about 6 months

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[131] Alfred Amuno, "The Three Main Components of a Computer System," *TurboFuture*, August 23, 2017, turbofuture.com/computers/Components-of-Computer (accessed October 10, 2017).

Accomplishment: The participants will be exposed to the resume writing process and how to correctly word an interview winning resume that will position them to achieve success. At the end of the program, the participants are expected to know how to write and format resume

- **Workplace skills**

    In today's working environment, workplace skills are essential for survival and advancement. For young adults to be able to advance in their careers will require having some important workplace skills. For example, communication skills are relevant in the work settings. Other skills like researching and analytical skills will also come in handy.

    Duration: This program is expected to last about 6 months to 1 year.

    Accomplishment: The participants will be able to learn about all these workplace skills. Mock projects will be implemented to ensure the skills are learned.

    In a competitive world, only those fully equipped with the right computer skills will likely succeed. The world as we know it is rapidly changing every day and it seems to be on a trajectory that is only looking upward with no end in sight. Computers are becoming more ubiquitous in every aspect of our lives and the trend is expected to dramatically increase in the years to come. As many are left out of the equation, their prospect dims; thereby making it hard for them to achieve any success or productivity in society. Competitively, as we live in an information-intensive economy, only those well-versed in the knowledge of computers will likely survive.[132] This New Wave Care

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[132] Philip Evans and Thomas S. Wurster, *Blown to Bits: How the New Economics of Information Transforms Strategy* (Boston: Harvard Business School, 2000).

program in its mission will work with the young adults so they are well-equipped for what their world has to offer in the future.

Cultural Revival

This program will revive Ghanaian folktales and the art of traditional storytelling (e.g. "Kwaku Anansi" – Anansi the Spider stories), proverbs, and adages that are in danger of being lost to life in the diaspora. In helping to reverse the trend, this project will also help discover the relevance of performing contemporary stories and weave themselves together down narrow alleyways of the biblical stories, for older generation to pass on life experiences to the younger generation. The exploration of traditional Ghanaian folktales will begin with the tales of "Anansi" the Spider's quaint antiquity tent known as "Anase Ekuraaa" (The Spider Village). In the form of a town hall meeting, younger adults will gather to hear old age Ghanaian parents within the community and neighborhood dig deep into the recess of their mind as they piece together bits of ancient tales and share dozens of folktales of their youth with them. Like an old discarded puzzle, in those magical hours of fragmented storytelling, some piece that seems to be lost forever probably because of television and social media (and so was the breakdown of the extended family), could recover such a foundational kernel of our existence we easily lost in the diaspora. It should be noted that "the woman as custodian of wisdom is inherent in the Akan axiom "let's consult the old woman, … Woman is also the repository of a people's culture because folklore, fairytales, bedtime stories, and traditional songs are embodied in her … Thus from time immemorial wisdom has been incarnated in woman."[133]

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[133] Ayim, *The Akan of Ghana*, 90.

While researching this project, I have had the grace and good fortune to listen to a Ghanaian grandmother, Mama Esi Benewaa (not the real name), a living fountain of wondrous "fairytales to articulate ideas or drive home a point on matters of serious deliberations, Twi can be difficult to understand."[134] As I listened to her recount a story about the infamous hare duping tortoise into buying a piece of land that turned out to be a beach, which "Ntikumah" (the son of "Ananse" the spider) found out about when the tide came in. As much as the purist in me wanted to know more from her, she stared at me and in a proverbial way, she stated that "if the tortoise wants a lot of blood, water is added to increase the blood," meaning when a person wants more of anything, then they should be ready to deal with the consequences that come with that new thing in their life. It seemed part of the problem is that so many of these stories, proverbs, and adages are far removed from our reality today. This project will make it possible for our urbanized young adults and kids to understand Kwaku Anansi stories because folktales are not only timeless, but also universal.

The curriculum will be designed to preserve the folktales by reimagining them so that they would resonate with children and adults as a vital way to transmit important information as well as moral lessons, as they are often rooted in specific places and contexts. Part of the curriculum will be to write stories that merged the old with the new, and "teachers are willing to draw upon a variety of teaching methods, teaching techniques, and resources, which include drama, folklore, drumming, art, crafts, storytelling, dance, literature, music, and poetry that emerge from the African, African-

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[134] Ibid., 6.

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American, and Christian traditions."[135] For example, drawing parallels between slavery

and the indiscriminate killing of young black men in America. Stories are jostling for

space in many minds that this piece of curriculum will tell dramatically. It is about

patriarchy, sexual abuse, polygamy, poverty, education, love, friendship; and so many

issues that performance storytelling could be a gateway to have open discussions on the

serious questions raised by contemporary life challenges able to translate beautifully into

performed stories. Since so many people inhibit multiple worlds in a diverse nation like

America, the curriculum will also use oral storytelling to bring Ghanaians and African

literature to give these new young adults moral lessons by adapting novels for

performance, as a way of preserving the structure and style of traditional folktales. One of

the goals of this cultural revival is that folktales will lead young adults back to

contemporary novels and open the door to storytelling, a simple way to fuse past and

present. Thus, with the concerted effort of the Ghanaian community, this program will

ground young adults who have lost touch with the reality of their cultural roots.

Besides, the New Wave Care housing facility will be surrounded by nature's

source of existence, its raw beauty, uniqueness, its sustainability, interdependence,

coherence, yet intricately woven together and its purpose. The creative source and

purpose of all nature seen around us is a close reminder of the significance of some

Ghanaian Akan traditional symbols, like the "Adinkra" symbol. "Representations of

ancient wisdom are commonly found in symbols of Adinkra clothes, sandals, etc. Such

Akan "hieroglyphs" and "pictographs" are also observed in architecture and fabrics. The

Akan *Adinkra* means "fare thee well" or simply "goodbye" … The symbols have

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[135] Smith, *Reclaiming the Spirituals*, 147.

religious and social interpretations.… Signs, like symbols, are abundant in Akan life and are easily expressed, especially through body language, i.e. dancing. Dance expressions range from grief to haughtiness."[136]

In this classic expression, the first step of true self-enlightenment in this program is when participants are greeted at the entrance of the chapel with the symbol "Gye Nyame," (derived from the Adinkra collections in Ghana) etched on the wooden door, transliterated "except God" but mirroring the biblical invocation "with God all things are possible" or "without me you can do nothing."[137] It also means "only God, a symbol that expresses the omnipotence of God"[138] an unspoken oral proverb used to communicate values, our feelings, and beliefs.

> In its abstract form, *Gye Nyame* is believed to have originated from a clenched fist with the right forefinger pointing skywards…. The forefinger in Akan is *Akyerekwan Nsateakoro*, the single finger, meaning there is only one omnipotent God, there is only one power in the universe and that power according to the Akan, is *Nyame*. Thus, *Gye Nyame* is an expression of the dependable and exceptional God that would lead or point out the way above all others,"[139] "and extending to the smallest existing form of life. Life for African people….is viewed and lived holistically.[140]

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[136] Ayim, *The Akan of Ghana*, 246.

[137] Ghana Culture Politics, "Adinkra Symbols and their meaning (English and Twi)," *Gye Nyame*, http://ghanaculturepolitics.com/adinkra-symbols-and-their-meaning-english-and-twi (accessed October 30, 2017).

[138] Ayim, *The Akan of Ghana*, 247.

[139] Ibid.

[140] Melva Wilson Costen, *African American Christian Worship*, 2nd ed. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007), 22.

Figure 5 "Gye Nyame"[141]

The "Gye Nyame" Ghanaian symbol, echoing the supremacy of God in every situation will be used to teach the lesson of overcoming your own giants as exemplified in the story of a young boy David, the son of Jesse who stood in faith and defeated giant Goliath the champion of the Philistines (I Samuel 17:1-51). Another aspect of "symbols are unspoken proverbs…found in clothing, designs. All cloth items, especially the traditional Ghana *kente*, bear meaningful signs and symbols, whose meanings range from the simple to the complex, from good omens to profane expressions,"[142] and feature in beauty decorations.

Similarly, behind where the podium stands in the center of each room of the facility are draperies with the "Gye Nyame" symbol designs in black and white incorporated with the Ashante traditional woven "Kente cloth." The silk "Kente cloth's origin is dually noted from its historical and legendary location of "Bonwire and Adawomase," in Ashanti region of Ghana, with its beautiful unity in storytelling and creativity. A much-needed virtue for these young adults and a big lesson not to be self-willed to the negligence of advice, direction, rebuke, etc. It is also reported that two friends, "Otaa Kraban" and his friend, "Kraku Amoagya" learnt this art of weaving by observing a spider weaving its web in the year 1650 and improved on it. When they told

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[141] "Gye Nyame" Symbols, http://www.adinkra.org/htmls/adinkra/gyen.htm (accessed November 1, 2017).

[142] Ayim, *The Akan of Ghana*, 247.

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the local chief about their findings, the chief in turn informed the then King, Asantehene who saw its artistic excellence and high quality that it became the custodian of Asante Kente." "*Kente*, a hand-woven fabric on looms, is indubitably the most expensive and elegant traditional and ceremonial cloth in Ghana…. The main colors of *kente* cloth are red, gold, yellow, green, blue, and white, with occasional pink and brown."[143] The beautifully woven kente drapery on the compounds of New Wave Care, symbolizes the woven together of each person's skills, talents, and gifts to cause growth/productivity. To this effect, will:

- Share known gifts/skills/talents and participants will choose to volunteer in areas of interest but with an overall goal of accomplishment in mind.

- Life mentors meet with young adult to examine case study areas of weaknesses and find ways of making it better.

- Positive character building (Example: late for morning devotion 2 times will mean washing your roommate's plate for that whole week) "the early bird catches the worm."
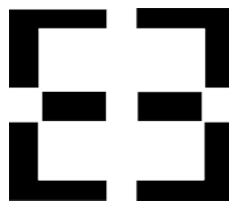
Figure 6 "Nea ofuro dua pa no na ye pia nuo"[144]

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[143] Ibid., 255.

[144] "Nea ofuro dua pa no na ye pia nuo" Symbols, http://www.adinkrasymbols.org/woforo-dua-pa-a/ (accessed November 1, 2017).

"Nea ofuro dua pa no na ye pia nuo" – S/he is helped who climbs a good tree! If you do what is right, God in essence will bring dream helpers into your life to pursue your life dream such as:

- Employment support by teaching basic computer skills.
- Educational support.
- Vocational skills (cooking classes – fresh foods/leftovers/creating new menus out of the same ingredients. It is to teach how to live a simple life to ones needs by managing what you have.
- Money management and time management (Ananse mischief).[145]
- Communication skills and interpersonal skills.

Above all, pursue leadership positions on the grounds of "*Sankofa*" principles, in which, like the biblical King Solomon, demands the necessity to reach into your past and pick up pearls of wisdom that you may have left behind for successful future aspirations. *Sankofa* literally means "go back and fetch it" or "go and retrieve it." In other words, it is not forbidden to go back to pick up what you may have left behind. In our haste to move into the future, it is necessary to go back and pick up pearls of wisdom that we may have left behind.[146]

Figure 7 "Sankofa"[147]

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[145] YouTube Video, "Ananse Mischief – Awake O Sleeper," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mfpa_pZy2to (accessed on October 20, 2017).

[146] Ayim, *The Akan of Ghana*, 248.

[147] "Sankofa" Symbols, http://www.adinkra.org/htmls/adinkra/sank.htm (accessed November 1, 2017).

A circle of wooden chairs will be designed under beautiful summer trees. Participants will sit in a circular form mimicking an interpersonal atmosphere like the Ghanaian (West African) dusk time storytelling in the rural areas. During this folktale telling time of cooperative learning, a volunteer older person is given a seat of prominence and sits at the head of this informal setting to tell of great and important lessons of "Kwaku Ananse" stories. Such storytelling requires a positive and supportive classroom climate of critical thinking in which participants are encouraged to have "the ability and inclination to make and assess conclusions based on evidence,"[148] presented in the storytelling for life application. Seats with the "Adinkra" symbol "Sankofa Yen Kyi" designed upholstery are used. By using this particular design "Sankofa Yen Kyi" (meaning if you go back for what is worth it is not an abomination), sends a message that God restoring broken adulthood is worth it. This traditional visual design and its transformative process parallels the story of the prodigal son who after squandering all his future fortune away from home and had become destitute, went back to his well-to-do loving father (Luke 15:11-32) for restoration. Likewise, each young adult participant is a recipient of God's gracious gift of being transformed of the past into productive adulthood.

After this storytelling session, participants will engage in a design craft workshop. Each will present their design and talk about their inspiration, process, and accomplishments. This is meant to teach the lesson of self-empowerment and the ability to change what is not achievable by the individual to accomplish the best results. After

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[148] Eggen and Kauchak, *Strategies and Models for Teachers*, 85.

this educational session each student is awarded a plaque designed with the Adinkra

symbol, "Wawa Aba," the seed of a tree in Ghana called "Wawa."
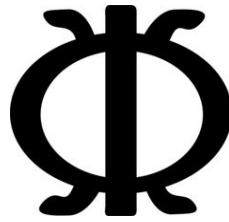
Figure 8 "Wawa Aba"[149]

It is a symbol depicting excellence in strength and in the Akan culture it describes

a tough individual who never gives up even in tough times – a lesson of perseverance for

young adults to emulate in this transitional program. To further drive home this door of

realization, a daily 30-minute devotional time together with peers would be set for early

dawn to allow these young adults to immerse, discover, rediscover, and reconnect with

their maker through the informed text of the Holy Scriptures under the paradigm of

"Siamese crocodiles, a symbol of human society."[150] As Kofi Ayim notes,

Figure 9 "Funtunfunefu Denkyemfunefu"[151]

In spite of our individuality (the two crocodiles have two tails and two heads), we

have something in common (the common stomach shared by the two crocodiles). The

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[149] "Wawa Aba" Symbols, http://www.adinkra.org/htmls/adinkra/wawa.htm (accessed November 1, 2017).

[150] Ayim, *The Akan of Ghana*, 248.

[151] "Funtunfunefu-Denkyemfunefu" Symbols, http://www.adinkra.org/htmls/adinkra/funt.htm (accessed November 1, 2017).

two crocodiles have a common stomach and yet they tend to fight over food as if the food were going into different stomachs. Extreme individuality is selfish and breeds contradictions in society. At some Christian communions we are urged to hold the bread and wait for others to receive their share as a sign of unity, but then drink the wine individually as a sign of our individuality. The symbol expresses the futility of social conflicts and urges cooperation among individuals in society.[152]

Also, *Osram ne nsromma*, the moon and the star, can help guide these young adults to submerge and reconnect culturally in unity, peace, and love.
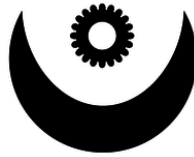
Figure 10 "Osram ne nsoromma"[153]

"Osram ne nsoromma…. The moon and the star, love birds," is a "symbol of unity and peace; an exhortation to emulate the example of the moon and stars, which are always together. *Kyekye pe aware*, meaning the North Pole Star, waits patiently for the return of the moon, her husband. In Egyptian cosmology, the nearby Dog Star Sothis (Sarius) is Isis, who follows her husband Osirus (Orion). In effect it signifies patience and loyalty in a man-woman relationship."[154] In a sense, building a godly relationship that will guide them to ask questions and respond prayerfully in the light of their devotional findings. This aesthetic view could facilitate as a foundational learning tool in the

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[152] Ibid., 248-249.

[153] "Osram ne nsoromma" Symbols, http://www.adinkra.org/htmls/adinkra/osra.htm (accessed November 1, 2017).

[154] Ibid., 249.

direction of "beauty in diversity" but in its original form. Because the trees and vegetation speak of a source of creation brings one in touch with his or her spirituality, young adults would be empowered to connect to the source of a new beginnings of productive adulthood.

Courtesy for Young Adults

Young Adults Curriculum Structure and Leadership Development

The goal of this New Wave Care development curriculum is to build resiliency skills, positive identity, and self-esteem for marginalized young adults (18-22 years) through this transitional living program. Decker F. Walker and Jonas F. Soltis write that curriculum "is the purposes, content, activities and organization inherent in the educational program of the school and in what teachers offer in their classrooms.[155] James Estep, Roger White, and Karen Estep define it this way: "A curriculum design is a statement of the institutional purpose, institutional goals and objections for learners, scope, contexts, methodology, and instructional and administrative models involved in an educational effort.... A design provides the basis for 'blueprinting' a curriculum plan."[156] Among other things, the transitional development curriculum design will focus on important learning experiences as a means for achieving the objectives and meeting the desired outcomes,[157] while developing principles as a guide for their future aspirations and development. Young adult participants will develop knowledge of self and others in order to prepare for effective leadership through the exposure to a series of activities that

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[155] Decker F. Walker and Jonas F. Soltis, *Curriculum and Aims*, 5th ed. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2009), 1.

[156] James Estep, Roger White, and Karen Estep, *Mapping Out Curriculum in Your Church: Cartography for Christian Pilgrims* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2012), 182.

[157] Ibid., 196.

promote positive academic and organizational skills. Aspects of this leadership development are to enhance young adult knowledge about the ability to manage their own learning and capacity to lead people. Types of learning experiences useful in attaining program objectives include "learning experiences to develop skills in thinking….acquire information….develop social attitudes….develop interest….and the development processes follow the development of objectives."[158]

The facilitated version of the New Wave curriculum is arranged into unit modules followed by activities and workshops. The role of the facilitator will not only facilitate the lessons but attend to the young adult participants' needs, encourage group interaction, foster interpersonal learning, follow participants' progress, and establish ground rules that takes into consideration participants' ideas, thoughts, and opinions. The participants on the other hand are to participate in all New Wave Care program activities, reflecting on their learning experiences. They will also need to abide by the rules so as to meet the expectations of integrity, respect, etc. as future leaders.

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[158] Ibid.

Curriculum Structure
Model 1

UNITS	GOALS
Overview of New Wave Care	Participants will develop knowledge of New Wave Care mission and vision. Build knowledge of self and others in order to prepare for personal growth and effective leadership process.
Academic Success and Career Awareness	Participants will learn how to plan their academic study skills and paths to career success.
Economical and Investment Pathways	Participants will learn about economic development while learning skills that will facilitate their involvement in family management, etc.
Moral Building and Positive Behaviors	Program will seek to encourage moral reasoning and ethical standards of conduct among young adults that brings positive change and capacity for adopting to change in healthy ways. They will also learn interpersonal skills, problem solving, etc. to understand behavioral development and change.
Computer and Financial Literacy	Young adults will learn computer skills and basics of financial literacy, as well as personal finance. They will learn the concepts of financial management and will understand what it means to have a successful financial plan.
Cultural Awareness and Civic Engagement	Youth will develop knowledge and awareness about the Ghanaian and African culture. They will be able to define culture and race. Participants will also develop consciousness of issues related to diversity, such as inclusion, cultural appreciation, prejudice, racism, and stereotyping.
Leadership Development and Mentorship	Young adults will learn the basic concepts of leadership development, respond to mentoring to develop and function according to their gifts and talents. They will also learn different models and theories of leadership and understand what it means to be a leader.

The curriculum is designed to be implemented during a period of four years with

marginalized young adults assigned a level of the activities for completion each week.

More importantly, fashion

> a program called "Education for Social Justice Ministry"....a curriculum of
> *diakonia*....racism, hunger, peace and sexism....to commit themselves to
> few minutes a day in prayerful meditation (*leitugia*); read on the issue
> regularly, be informed and carry it intelligently (*Didache*); meet weekly
> with others and connect the issue with their own lives (*Koinonia*);
> formulate their responses to these actions by reporting their experience

verbally/or in writing to the wider community (*Kerygma*) and engage in direct activity that involve them in the issue.[159]

The duration of the curriculum will depend on participants' range of experience, knowledge, and interest in the varied program. Overall, each activity should last approximately 55 minutes per session, unless otherwise stated. Each unit has a course description, goals, and expectations. "To evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum….data on teachers, the curriculum, and students alike"[160] will be linked directly to the objectives of New Wave Care program. While New Wave Care will encourage that each activity be implemented, there will be some degree of flexibility for the facilitator to give time consideration. Learning at a more meaningful level with effective time management of attendance will be encouraged as each program is expected to affect young adults' personal, cultural, and community experience. This will encourage group participation and involvement through critical thinking activities pertaining to peer-interaction, social and cultural awareness, all with the aim of being interesting and effective in serving young adults.

Young Adult Outcomes

Hopefully, outcomes for young adults will be influenced positively by the aforementioned program interventions in providing opportunities for the young ones to interact with caring adults in actual work training and on-the-job learning experiences. Among other things, these program interventions will also try to nurture additional skills in these marginalized young adults, especially self-esteem, leadership skills, and empowered economically for higher standard of living.

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[159] Harris, *Fashion Me a People*, 157.

[160] Estep, White, and Estep, *Mapping Out Curriculum in Your Church*, 197.

Self-sufficiency and Money Management

Employment and employability are key measures of self-sufficiency and plays important role in keeping young adults out of unemployment and poverty. A long history of research indicates that it has been linked to humanity's better general health, longer life expectancy, and mental well-being.[161] The eagerness of the young adult participant groups attest to their likelihood to be in school, job training, and be employed to reduce welfare dependency. Due to long periods of disconnection associated with these young adults financial/personal obstacles that continue into adulthood, New Wave Care will make programs available to young adults that attempt to reduce welfare dependence, while attempting to increase their practical skills, work habits, and job readiness as they seek to enter the workforce and establish financial independence. This will give them a strong internal sense of control; trust their own instincts to carefully make their own decision wisely to achieve a higher self-esteem, more innovation, able to improve their standard of living and overall well-being.

Unfortunately, young adults are living in a fast-paced environment and are growing up to see their parents doing a lot better than their grandparents, so it has become difficult to comprehend what it really means to struggle. Asthana summarizes the lifestyle of young adults stating that "Teenagers and Young adults – Generation Y have watched with horror as their parents worked punishing hours in their scramble for money and status. Now as this group goes in search of jobs, they have different priorities. They

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[161] Jacinta Bronte-Tinkew, Brett Brown, Jennifer Carrano, and Rebecca Shwalb, "Logic Models and Outcomes for Youth in the Transition to Adulthood," *Child Trends*, April 19, 2017, https://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/2005-13LogicModelsTransitiontoAdulthood.pdf (accessed on September 21, 2017), 19.

care less about salaries, and more about flexible working, time to travel and a better

work-life balance."[162]

The socioeconomic situation in this city is such that young adults (18-22) with

higher education get better paying jobs and live a more fulfilling life. Research data by a

group of economists shows that

> For the typical student, additional achievement requires additional time
> spent on learning, which has an opportunity cost: the value of the next best
> alternative use of his time. Better jobs, better chances of receiving college
> scholarships and better chances of being admitted to a desired college are
> among the perceived benefits from additional effort. Students will work
> harder on achievement as long as the benefit they expect from additional
> effort is greater than the cost of their best forgone opportunity.[163]

This statement portrays education, if perceived to be beneficial to young adults, is

advantageous to young adults and they could invest in avenues that would be able to

bring them returns in the near future. If a plan is made to invest for example to save 5%

of an individuals' income, that investment plan should be backed with discipline and the

young adult (18-22) should follow through with their investment plans. The financial

instrument that young adults (18-22) may invest in is dependent on the investments that

they are interested in. According to Matt Becker's online article: "Stocks are typically a

good place to invest some of your long-term money, but are riskier when dealing with

shorter-term goals"[164] He also suggests that bonds unlike stocks "don't offer as much

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[162] Anashuka Asthana, "They Don't Live For Work…They Work To Live," *The Guardian*, May 24, 2008, https://www.theguardian.com/money/2008/may/25/workandcareers.worklifebalance (accessed September 12, 2017).

[163] Ronald L. Moomaw, Michael R. Edgmand, and Kent W. Olson, *Economics and Contemporary Issues* (Mason, OH: Thomson/South-Western, 2010), 237.

[164] Matt Becker, "The Five most Important Factors for Your Investment Success," *The Simple Dollar*, February 3, 2015, https://www.thesimpledollar.com/five-most-important-factors-for-investment-success/ (accessed September 12, 2017).

return as stocks, but they also carry less risk." These are two financial instruments that young adults could look into with regard to investment.

This key is so important because young adults (18-22) can actually make their wealth from being innovative. Inventing an individual's own original ideas to produce a product or a service that meets the needs of their circle of influence is productive. The likes of Warren Buffet, Donald Trump, Mark Zuckerberg, and Bill Gates all became business tycoons, because of their ability to take risks and explore innovations. Nevertheless, it is unfortunate that young adults (18-22) are not taught about saving at a younger age and most of them end up in that financial hole before they figure out that they are in trouble. "The American tax system is best described as a hybrid system because it relies on taxes levied on income, consumption, and wealth."[165] This is a tax system that does not exempt any one, including young adults from filing and paying income tax.

As per the Internal Revenue code (IRC) "Section 1 of the Code imposes an income tax on the income of every individual who is a citizen or resident of the United States and, to the extent provided by section 871(b) or 877(b), on the income of a nonresident alien individual."[166] This section implies that Young Adults (18-22) are not exempt from filing or paying taxes and suggests that compliance with federal tax obligations is voluntary and mandatory. However, the Internal Revenue Service takes enforcement action once filing and compliance with federal tax obligations are not made voluntarily. Enforcement could include the service filing, the returns on behalf of an

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[165] Ansel M. Sharp, Charles A. Register, and Paul W. Grimes, *Economics of Social Issues* (New York: McGraw-Hill/Irwin, 2010), 418.

[166] Cornell Law School, Legal Information Institute, "Income Tax on Individuals," https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/26/1.1-1 (accessed December 12, 2017).

individual which could lead to the individual owing taxes, a levy being issued on the taxpayer's account, liens and judgments being filed. The ripple effect of non-compliance could jeopardize the financial future of a young adult (18-22) who had intentions of achieving the American dream. For example, a lien places a huge dent on an individual's credit score, making it difficult to obtain a line of credit for investment such as real estate. As long as a young adult (18-22) makes taxable income (income that is not exempt from the filing threshold), the New Wave Care program will advise them to file and pay the taxes to avoid the enforcement action that could be taken later by the IRS.

The tax federal system of the United States "… is a progressive tax rate system, meaning that the ratio of taxes paid to income rises as you move up the income ladder"[167] This means that the richer you get, the more taxes you pay. But to think of it as being richer is always better since the tax you pay would be relatively, just a small a fraction of an individual's income, than it would have been, had it been the person was poorer.

As previously stated, back in Ghana, a system of financial support called "Susu" or "Motselo" as people from Botswana call it is an example in this direction. This is a system of financial support where a group of people (could be any number) come together to save and they take turns benefitting from this savings. For the sake of this example, I would use 4 young adults (18-22), W, X, Y, and Z. If for example, they decide on saving to help each other financially it could be as follows:

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[167] Sharp et al., *Economics of Social Issues*, 420.

PERSON	Week 1 Contribution	Week 2 Contribution	Week 3 Contribution	Week 4 Contribution
W	$50	$50	$50	$50
X	$50	$50	$50	$50
Y	$50	$50	$50	$50
Z	$50	$50	$50	$50
TOTAL CONTRIBUTION	$200.00	$200.00	$200.00	$200.00
RECEIPIENT	W	X	Y	Z

Table 1 "Susu" (Bank) Financial System

A look at the above table shows that in the 1st week for example, person W in essence only contributed $150.00. Thus, in addition to their $50, they have an extra $150.00 to spend, which they would not have otherwise spent because they may not have that lump $150.00 at their disposal at the end of week 1. This cycle continues until all the participants have received their share. For the last recipient (Person Z), it boils down to being the same as saving $50.00 a week for 4 weeks and that is equivalent to saving $200.00 a month. Hypothetically, if there are more than 10 people, one person could get $500.00 at a stretch and for young adults that is substantial amount of money to spend.

In my opinion, this system is better than taking out a loan at the bank or acquiring credit cards, since it avoids the dreaded aspect of interest rates, associated with credit cards and bank loans. The American version of the *Susu* system is the "piggy bank," where at a young age, children are taught to save their pocket change and drop their quarters, nickels, dimes or pennies into a little bank that the money goes in, but they are unable to retrieve it at their pleasure. This could also be a profitable way to have young adults (18-22) learn management order and consistency in terms of planning and establishing direction that creates vision and builds strategies for productive adulthood.[168]

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[168] Peter G. Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice,* 7th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2015), 14.

The second system that I have grown to very much appreciate is one of saving but in this case the savings grow exponentially. Young adults (Ages 18-22) can achieve the American dream through the exponential savings table below. It requires commitment and its advantage is that it does not have to deal with other people, where trust becomes an issue. A young adult (18-22) can do it all by themselves. An illustration of this saving is as follows:

Week	$1 Savings	$2 Savings	$5 Savings	Week	$1 Savings	$2 Savings	$5 Savings
1	1	2	5	27	27	54	135
2	2	4	10	28	28	56	140
3	3	6	15	29	29	58	145
4	4	8	20	30	30	60	150
5	5	10	25	31	31	62	155
6	6	12	30	32	32	64	160
7	7	14	35	33	33	66	165
8	8	16	40	34	34	68	170
9	9	18	45	35	35	70	175
10	10	20	50	36	36	72	180
11	11	22	55	37	37	74	185
12	12	24	60	38	38	76	190
13	13	26	65	39	39	78	195
14	14	28	70	40	40	80	200
15	15	30	75	41	41	82	205
16	16	32	80	42	42	84	210
17	17	34	85	43	43	86	215
18	18	36	90	44	44	88	220
19	19	38	95	45	45	90	225
20	20	40	100	46	46	92	230
21	21	42	105	47	47	94	235
22	22	44	110	48	48	96	240
23	23	46	115	49	49	98	245
24	24	48	120	50	50	100	250
25	25	50	125	51	51	102	255
26	26	52	130	52	52	104	260
				TOTAL SAVINGS	**$1,378.00**	**$2,756.00**	**$6,890.00**

Table 2 Exponential Savings

It can be shown from the illustration how just $1.00 a week, and increasing by a dollar each week can save a young adult $1,378.00 for a whole year. Depending on how much a young adult makes, doing this system in $5.00 increments would help a young adult to save almost $7,000.00 in a year. Doing this consistently for about 5 years is a remarkable savings of $169,650.00. For the $1.00 increments, young adult could save $33,930.00 over 5 years. As insignificant as $1.00 or $5.00 could be, this is how much a young adult (18-22) could save in as little as five years, thus achieving their America dream, in a debt free environment, and being able to "influence others and create visions for change."[169]

As a follow-up, young adults will be taught in their communities of how to save. The saving systems used back in the day when there was nothing like credit will be introduced back into the society to teach young adults how to save. Workshops and seminars will be conducted in the communities where these young adults (18-22) live to educate them on the benefits of making wealth in their pursuit of achieving the American dream. In as much as some parents feel obliged to provide for their children, I am of the opinion that this should be limited to their basic needs. In that way, children will grow to become young adults who acknowledge that hard work really pays off and they will achieve their American dream working hard and passing that ethic on to their children, a generation of hard-working young adults.

Wellness and Civic Engagement

Research shows that young adults actively maintaining good health choices such as good diet and exercises can ensure their general well-being. Once they make it a habit

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[169] Northouse, *Leadership*, 14.

of practicing good health choices, it becomes a part of them as they grow into adulthood. They are each responsible if they make poor health choices.[170] Young adults will be taught basic health habits of good dieting, through the New Wave Care program.

Young adults will be challenged to eat foods with less ingredients on the packaging, eat food high in fruits and vegetables; and eat breakfast so that their body will have enough energy for the day. Drinking lots of water will help nourish their brain, muscles and tissues which are comprised of water. As young adults develop healthy eating habits it is likely to follow them into adulthood and this becomes an advantage as they age.[171]

Sleep is also another part of healthy living for young adults, especially because their bodies are still growing and developing. Sleeping about 8-10 hours per night will be recommended and encouraged. Research has also shown that this has led to an increase in athletic stamina and reduces fatigue during competitions. The body also uses sleep time to repair damaged cells and organs as well as digest food and extract nutrients. Therefore, adequate sleep reduces inflammation in the body, which can be a precursor to heart disease, autoimmune disease, arthritis, diabetes, and premature aging. Also, low academic performance had been linked to poor sleep. Exercises like running, biking, hiking, swimming, gymnastics, skiing, rollerblading, volleyball etc. can help combat childhood obesity, which has resulted to an epidemic of type 2 diabetes. Also, a lack of exercise can lead to other diseases such as heart disease, breathing problems, sleeping disorders, anxiety, and depression.

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[170] Charlene Brown and Brooks Applegate, "Holistic Wellness Assessment for Young Adults," *Journal of Holistic Nursing* 30, no. 4 (Dec 2012): 235-243.

[171] K. L. Brigham, "Predictive Health: The Imminent Revolution in Healthcare," *Journal of the American Geriatric Society* 58, S2 (Oct 2010): S298-302.

As young adults, education is key; understanding their options and ways to improve their health has positive ramifications that will go a long way to help them and others as well. A research project was done to examine some of the holistic ways to improve health behaviors among college students, which involved 41 participants who were required to participate in an 11-week program. The authors of this research project wanted to examine the influence of a holistic model of wellness on activity levels among obese and sedentary college students. Each participant was required to record their daily walking totals and complete 5 bimonthly classes where principles of holistic wellness were discussed. Pre- and post-test values of activity level which include walking activity, cardiovascular training, general activity and resistance training. And also, pre- and post-test knowledge and self-efficacy related to principles of holistic wellness. The participants also completed a one-month follow up. The results of the research work showed that the participants reported an increase in general exercise activity, resistance training and walking behavior, as well as self-efficacy and knowledge concerning principles of holistic wellness. The authors also observed a decrease in body fat and body mass. This research proves that exercise and adherence behavior and a lifestyle approach can lead to a significant change in the health and total wellbeing of young adults.[172]

By practicing the above-mentioned steps in the New Wave Care program, young adults will experience some positive outcomes such as a good night sleep leading to improvement of clear mind and academic performance. Moreover, young adults are less likely to develop eating disorders that can easily identify them when they arise in others,

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[172] D. Joseph Gieck and Sara Olsen, "Holistic Wellness as a Means to Developing a Lifestyle Approach to Health Behavior Among College Students," *Journal of American College Health* 56, no. 1 (July 2010): 29-30.

educate others including their own peers, and help them combat a lot of diseases such as heart disease, obesity, diabetes, hypertension, autoimmune diseases, and others because of the healthy lifestyle choices they made at a younger age.

Positive Behaviors and Family Formation

In sum, the Model for New Wave Care programs are meant to positively influence economic, intellectual, social, and psychological outcomes of young adults who participate in this transition to adulthood programs. The unique nature and effectiveness of these programs in improving outcomes of young adult participants are not only geared towards a targeted population, but its rich integrated cultural content is to interact with others and promote an overall decrease in young adults' problem behaviors.

Conclusion

In the final analysis, the transitional living research program currently exists to impact young adults by providing a place where they can re-establish their self-worth, re-discover their place in the community, find compassion and love through spiritual discovery, and a stable living environment. The programs vary in length from a few weeks in the summer to year-round, with most meeting several times quarterly of the year, hoping to achieve short- and long-term expected outcomes. The activities, volunteer staff, programs, and available financial resources will be harnessed for specific program. Some models of the New Wave programs can positively influence economic, intellectual, social, and psychological outcomes, while others could help build positive basic life skills, health behaviors and encourage career exploration, improve self-confidence with the sole purpose of young adults achieving their full potential and become productive members of society.

Discussion

In this study, young adults (18-22 years) with their immigrant parents did extensive coordinated research to ensure productive futures for a new wave generation. With consensus, all participants agreed that if this mandate is not pursued the future dreams of young adults and the Ghanaian immigrant church as a whole will be shattered, immersing them in Ghanaian symbol of "Nkonsonkonson" ("chain link"). "Each person is a link in the chain that links us all together in society. Symbol of unity, responsibility, and mutual support."[173] As a result, participants were eager and proposed different ways young adults and their immigrant parents could be helped break new ground in transition to a fruitful adulthood, which include new opportunities with its rich resource inputs translating into positive outcomes.

The analysis of the research data gave insight for the need to create a reliable model and the training curriculum to systematically tackle these issues in a youth-centered manner. As people of all persuasions intentionally pursue an educational journey to acquire extensive knowledge in a practical professional setting, all sixty-seven group participants realized the need for such study program. In addition, they believe such cutting-edge transitional living program will serve as a missionary enterprise designed to equip with the needed knowledge, skills capable of transforming their holistic life, and even "develop specific skills and competencies for ministry."[174]

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[173] Ayim, *The Akan of Ghana*, 252.

[174] George M. Hillman, Jr., ed., *Preparing for Ministry: A Practical Guide to Theological Field Education* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic & Professional, 2008), 172.

Limitation

The limitations that were discovered during the study hinges on young adults and their immigrant parents' low economic and financial status; therefore, life is hard for them in the city. Looking at their standard of living relative to the high-cost of urban living, they don't have the necessary income capacity to own and consume goods and services, and to have opportunities for development. This seems to be an exclusion from the opportunity of the American Dream and participation in a marginalization from society. The feeling of hopelessness, laziness, due to the financial and economic status of not having enough resources to pursue their dreams is a factor. It was also found that almost all the homes of these young adults are made up of single mothers, who barely had time for their families because they work two jobs (others absent from the home because working in residential nursing homes), in order to take care of their young ones, paving the way for risky behaviors.

For instance, due to such hectic schedules, working single parents could not find time to nurture and build loving relationship with their children. There is also lack of spiritual discipline like reading, studying, meditating on the Bible in the home, as well as attending worship services, prayer meetings, fellowshipping with other believers to ensure spiritual formation of their youth. In this regard, in terms of a future vision of a reasonable or ideal productive life for young adults, the immigrant Ghanaian parents could implement a timetable and utilize every resource given in this study program/lessons towards a viable transformation of their youth.

At best, the Ghanaian religious community in concert with the traditional Ghanaian community can create a social center for emerging young adults to help single immigrant parents and their young ones utilize this model of program/curriculum.

However, "the organizational culture needs to support member involvement."[175] This will bring a great deal of assistance to these struggling immigrant parents who do not have time to spend with their young ones, due to heavy work schedules. The community center could also serve as a place where a forum will be held to discuss prevailing challenging issues of justice and socio-economic concerns affecting the future aspirations of the young adults, with single parents participating. However, this is not meant to take the place of the parents in the lives of the young people, but to assist them in parenting.

Future Research

Active learning builds on prior knowledge, and will be part and parcel of human educational development in a complex social environment. Education research has advanced on several fronts, helping to birth new ideas and discoveries. Through learning and educational adventure of New Wave Care program/lessons, young adults and their immigrant single parents will have the opportunity to fully explore, as well as develop their God-given abilities leading to an enrichment of self-fulfillment and becoming active contributors to society. Nancy Merz Nordstrom says, "we base everything on the belief that our capacity to learn and grow does not decrease as our years increase." Nordstrom concludes that "lifelong learning enables us to keep up with society's changes – especially the technological ones. A learning environment with our peers not only makes it possible to stay abreast of change, it also makes it fun."[176] Prospering in such educational pursuits will not only lead to enjoying a healthier, happy life, but thereby impacting the community, society, city, nation, and the world at large.

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[175] Northouse, *Leadership*, 354.

[176] Nancy Merz Nordstrom, "Top 10 Benefits of Lifelong Learning," http://www.selfgrowth.com/articles/Top_10_Benefits_of_Lifelong _Learning.html (accessed on October 19, 2017).

Personally, through this project, it is my avowed hope that God will help me to gain an interest as a qualitative researcher, so that I will be able to take the conceptual tools that will be developed in this study and apply them to young adults age 23 to 30 years old, in a continuing future transitional living program for disadvantaged Ghanaian young adults in the diaspora.

CHAPTER 4
THEOLOGICAL/BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

How can these Ghanaian young adults age 18-22 years find liberation in Exile,

according to 1 Peter 1:1-2 and 1 Peter 2:11, so that they will not find themselves in an

oppressive struggle?

This question will essentially enable the Ghanaian immigrant church, the clergy,

community leaders, the parents, and young adults between age 18-22 years to understand

and address prevailing issues of neglect, abandonment in these challenging times of

economic recovery, so as to acquire the necessary skills and mentor these new waves of

young adults in an educational curriculum. This will improve the living standards and

effectively transform these marginalized Ghanaian young adults that will stay with them

for a lifetime.

Theologically, the world of second-generation immigrant Ghanaian young adults

in America, especially New York City in my view, is one of neglect – a hopeless world in

need of liberation. The second-generation immigrants are mostly children of first-

generation Ghanaian immigrants who were born in the United States, as well as those

born in the homeland of their parents and brought to the United States of America.[177]

However, "second-generation youth must deal with the two-cultural worlds of their own

families and cultural communities, and their peers, schools, and the larger society."[178]

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[177] Yeboah, *Black African Neo-Diaspora*, 158.

[178] Berry et al., *Immigrant Youth in Cultural Transition*, 6.

Perhaps the most significant observations and on-going revelations in the Ghanaian

community is the extent to which second-generation young adults resist tension and

conflicts that flare up, by moving out of parental homes with its related stress of drinking

and partying. While no clergy, first-generation immigrant parents, or community leaders,

ever doubted that there existed the challenge of neglect of their second-generation

Ghanaian-American young adults in their exilic constituencies, the American society also

acknowledges it has had bad outcomes. Marilyn Halter and Violet Showers John point

out that "even their children, who migrated at an early age or were born in the United

States, are not wholly free from it."[179] The Ghanaian immigrant church also never

doubted that the magnitude of their abandonment is giving rise to incarceration, teenage

pregnancy, college dropouts, using drugs, etc. and is the primary responsibility of

Ghanaians everywhere in the diaspora.

Although, most Ghanaian immigrant churches engage in traditional worship

services, Moses O. Biney argues that the central concern of the members is the

enhancement of spirituality, communality and maintenance of ethnic identity. Therefore,

the Africans in the diaspora are known for their zealous religious life. Africans, according

to Biney, rely on their religion for daily living. He asserts: "Africans carry their religion

with them wherever they go – to their farms, parties, examination rooms, and

parliaments."[180] Ghanaian immigrants in the United States and other parts of the world

are no exception. In addition, the Ghanaian immigrant church has been the center of their

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[179] Marilyn Halter and Violet Showers Johnson, *African and American: West Africans in Post-Civil Rights America* (New York: New York University Press, 2014), 35.

[180] Moses Biney, "Singing the Lord's Song in a Foreign Land: Spirituality, Community, and Identity in a Ghanaian Immigrant Congregation," in *African Immigrant Religions in America*, ed. Jacob Olupona and Regina Gemignani, 259-278 (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 259.

social life as well as the focal point of the Ghanaian civil society. Nevertheless, the

Ghanaian churches were aware that the young adults needed help, but they were unsure

of what they needed because young people live in a world of their own, divorced of adult

participation and relationship. Biney explains that "for many of the second generation,

the issue of leaving or remaining in the church was just a small part of the larger problem

of trying to negotiate two worlds – their parents' world and their own contemporary one

– in order to form their own identity…such contrasting views between the first and

second generation about the way the generation should lead their lives generated friction

at various levels."[181] It should also be noted that, some concerned parents in the Ghanaian

community point out that:

> My main reason for coming to the United States was to be able to take
> care of my family the best way I could. I want my boys to get the best
> education, so they can do something good with their lives. But look at
> where we live; look at what surrounds us—drugs, guns, crime. If I don't
> protect my children from these, I will have toiled in vain. This is what they
> don't understand. They want to have what they call "freedom." Is
> "freedom" that leads to death and destruction really freedom? The Bible
> says, "Train a child the way he should go," and that is exactly what I am
> trying to do.[182]

Undoubtedly, the Ghanaian immigrant church wrestles with open sores and

fearful spiritual darkness of how does the Ghanaian community scattered in the diaspora

develop its own sense of self in a strange land, more importantly, as aliens in exile.

Addressing his pastoral letter to the churches struggling in difficult social situations in the

provinces of Asia Minor, the apostle Peter's description of Christians as *"strangers in the*

world scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia" (1 Peter

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[181] Moses O. Biney, *From Africa to America: Religion and Adaptation among Ghanaian Immigrants in New York* (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 135-136.

[182] Ibid., 136.

1:1ff, NIV) in the huge expanse of half of Asia Minor, is reminiscent of the struggles of the Ghanaian churches in the diaspora. Probably tiny, persecuted congregations spread across the Roman provinces of Asia Minor, struggling to keep their faith alive against the pressure of a vastly pagan environment with a despotic ruler. The apostle writes to encourage the Christian community to look beyond their scatteredness and suffering, and see themselves as God's chosen people, thus, helping them to have a positive attitude towards their earthly circumstances (1 Peter 2:11ff). Although, the legal status of Christians in the Roman Empire was unclear, the likelihood of them facing trials and persecution under the tyranny of Roman rule is evident. It seems to be most likely the persecution was probably instigated by pagan neighbors of the Christian believers, perhaps with the support of local officials. For instance, "in 64 CE fire destroyed much of the city of the City of Rome. Then Emperor Nero, seeking to divert public anger, accused the Christians of having started the inferno and launched a wave of persecution against them. Hundreds appear to have been executed during this episode, including both Peter and Paul, according to the later letter of I Clement."[183] In this regard, they could expect social and economic persecution from the Roman Empire, the Jews, and their own families.

Historically, within the Roman imperial cult, there was a local independent in "the guise of fate and piety"[184] worship; yet at the same time imperial cults were established for Imperial Lords so that people would pay homage to them and to the Roman Empire as well. Local officials and conquered territories demonstrate their piety by following and

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[183] Dale T. Irvin and Scott W. Sunquist, *Modern Christianity from 1454-1800*, vol. 2 *History of the World Christian Movement* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2012), 77.

[184] Neil Elliott, *The Arrogance of Nations: Reading Romans in the Shadow of Empire* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008), 28.

honoring the emperor through the imperial cult and made sacrifices so that the benefactions from the Emperor could flow freely from Rome to the provinces and conquered towns. In a sense of piety and religiosity individual liberties of worship is denied. So politics and religion are employed in the administration of the empire. How can one demonstrate one's faith in the Roman imperial cult while at the same time declaring one's loyalty to the Lordship of Jesus Christ? And in an era of Judean (Christian) persecution, conniving with Roman imperialism and colonization was impossible. So there was no disconnection between religion and politics; both were intricately linked. So Judeans who wanted to maintain their loyalty to God were threatened by the imperial order. The Roman imperial ideology was based on systemic oppression and arrogant hypocrisy of wicked rulers who oppressed the truth. On the other hand, the gospel affects salvation. It creates righteousness and justice for people, for communities, and for nations. It rescued human beings from the sociopolitical reality of Roman imperialism with its massive system of exploitation by the ruling majority oppressing its subjects.[185] This was like modern capitalist slavery in which the global economy is being controlled by the rich at the expense of the poor. There is always going to be an oppressive system that is not gracious and does not create community, but it ostracizes them, thus denying them justice. Writes Perkins, justice is the freedom bestowed in Christ, and is the antithesis of slavery.[186]

Peter's readers were facing the threat and reality of persecution for their faith. In contrast, how does the Ghanaian become both African and Christian in the American

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[185] Elliot, *The Arrogance of Nations*, 7-8.

[186] Pheme Perkins, *Abraham's Divided Children: Galatians and the Politics of Faith* (Harrisburg, PA: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2001), 95.

corrupt capitalist economy and not neglect their young adults? As exiles in the diaspora, the adult Ghanaian sometimes perceived their sojourning in America as economic exile, while their second generation Ghanaian-American young adults mimic it as self-enforced exile due to the way the youth are looked down upon in their own Ghanaian cultural set-up, vis-à-vis the racism they face in the American culture. In his book, *America's Original Sin*, Jim Wallis writes, "race is about the American story, and about each of our own stories. Overcoming racism is more than an issue or cause – it is also a story, which can be part of our stories too."[187] Jim Wallis further notes that "the story about race embedded in America at the founding of our nation was a lie; it is time to change the story and discover a new one."[188] America's shameful racial history is a part of a larger story of thousands of years of the defeat, oppression and enslavement of various groups. The practice of the objectification of one group over another appears to have been embedded in the psyche of humankind since the beginning of recorded history. It is time to examine closely the unconsciousness humankind has inherited and the archetypes created out of instinct. The steadfast love of God finding fulfillment in an introverted mindset will allow our spiritual communities to be the leading voice in the creation of the new story of race in America. Otherwise, if not, it begs the question, "What is the purpose of these spiritual communities?" The capacity to lose the self in order to embrace the other will be the defining element in the new archetype created in our churches, synagogues, mosque, etc. As James Baldwin says, "if the concept of God has any validity or any case, it can only be to make us larger, freer and more loving. If God cannot do

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[187] Jim Wallis, *America's Original Sin: Racism, White Privilege, and the Bridge to a New America* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2016), 1.

[188] Ibid.

this, then it is time we get rid of him."[189] As might be expected, Ghanaians may be citizens of another world, and still have to *"live…among the pagans"* (1 Peter 2:12, NIV). They can do so in a sense of God's creative good, an expression of His love and the re-establishment of His good name.

The Ghanaian immigrant community/churches cannot overlook the predicament of these marginalized young adults. Sometimes it brings with it memories of not only a whole sense of wandering in the wilderness, but as aliens in exile, it epitomizes the question the psalmist raises of do the Ghanaian sing the Lord's song in a strange/foreign land of America, especially in the challenging time of Donald Trump's presidency, in which immigrants are being deported to their homeland? The psalmist's old question is therefore relevant for today as Ghanaians seek to make sense of their exilic life and how to respond to this powerful enemy of deportations affecting parents in the Ghanaian communities in this difficult time of immigration reforms. This transitional living program offers an alternative vision in the midst of American life to engage in redemptive dialogue that empowers parents, young adults, and leaders in the Ghanaian communities and challenges us to recover the power of imagination for dramatic restoration. There is a new possibility that resists the easy/evil way and engages the power of a new day! In contrast, as aliens and strangers, Ghanaians face situations of now and not yet. Peter instructs the churches of Asia Minor about their present and their future pilgrim.

The apostle Peter in 1 Peter 2:11 urges us as aliens and strangers of our new position as God's own possession which sets us apart from the people of this world to

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[189] James Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time* (New York: Vintage, 1992), 47.

become aliens in this world. Yet, filled with apostolic passion to this new community

which are in conflict with the Roman as well as the secular community. This basic

experience puts Christians in a new social location and a new community paving the way

for a ministry of reconciliation, a dichotomy, in which first and second-generation

Ghanaians find themselves.

Reconciliation has not only been a dominant theme across theological schools of

thought, but is also a very central theological development in the New Testament,

particularly, in the Pauline letters. According to G. Wade Rowatt, Jr.:

> Reconciliation, a major theme of Christian scripture, is a process of
> restoring broken or strained relationships between persons, individuals,
> and God. Reconciliation is bridge building over the troubled waters of
> crisis. Reconciliation is the caring adult's response to the teenager's
> disunity and brokenness. The incarnation has at its heart reconciling
> persons to God. . . Reconciliation attempts to assist adolescents to see their
> place in the family, with their peers, at school, and in society at large, and
> to equip them to live in growing, mutually enhancing relationships.[190]

It is also one aspect of Christ's work of redemption, the restoration of the sinner

to fellowship with God. Theologically, that God figure actively in liberating the

oppressed "is essential to understand redemption as a communal, not just an individual,

experience"[191] and implies that God makes beauty out of the ashes, articulated in true

transformative ability. For that reason, the basic experience is how reconciliation puts

humanity in a new social location and gives me the ministry of reconciliation.

The need of reconciliation is because of sin. God's attitude to sin is that of wrath

and man is hostile to God (Romans 8:7). Nevertheless, because of this enmity between

God and man, the reconciliation of "making peace" is needed. The nature of

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[190] Rowatt, *Adolescents in Crisis*, 11.

[191] Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Sexism & God-Talk: Toward a Feminist Theology* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1983), 193.

reconciliation, according to Paul, brings with it a change of attitude, for humans are seen in Christ and not in ourselves (2 Corinthians 5:18; Romans 5:11). This comes from family life and friendship (2 Corinthians 5:19). Jesus came into the world to reconcile humans to God. There is a separation between God and humanity. Jesus is that which unites and overcomes, and restores unity. Reconciliation restores creation and is part of the redemptive work of God. Is a completed action as a result of the finished work of Christ, and we are to receive that which is offered (2 Corinthians 5:20)? For that reason, races are united (Ephesians 2:14-15), through Christ, so that Gentiles as well as Jews may share in God's promised redemption. As Paul explained, through Jesus Christ, Jew and Gentile are brought together into "one body," so all Christians are one body – *"one new man."* This was *"through the cross by which he put to death their hostility"* (Ephesians 2:14-16). Miroslav Volf and Maurice Lee observe that "the community gathered in faith and commitment is a church—that is, that the community's trust and obedience are in and to Christ—implies that it must be a catholic community."[192] Thus, God has chosen to place the Church with Christ at the very center of His plan to reconcile the world to Himself (Ephesians 1:20-23). Is this hope realistic? If so, it gives Christians the reason to have the potential to demonstrate a model of reconciliation in the troubled world of the new century.

The Church always placed a considerable emphasis on open acknowledgment of sin, and called for a change in attitudes and forgot that a united church carries the ministry of reconciliation beyond its own walls. Personal faith response brings with it a

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[192] Miroslav Volf and Maurice Lee, "The Spirit and the Church," in *Advents of the Spirit: An Introduction to the Current Study of Pneumatology*, ed. Bradford E. Hinze and Lyle Dabney, 380-407 (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2001), 393.

deep personal connection between the individual and the divine through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Though reconciliation begins with personal conversion, the Church as the community of the Holy Spirit should manifest the new humanity that Christ is creating to become visible in communities that have a quality of life that reflects Christ example. Such unified identity of being a people and a community, both within a city/culture and the larger worldwide context is essential for effective witness. Jurgen Moltmann posits that "as the church of Jesus Christ, the church is bound together with the history and destiny of her Lord."[193] The Ghanaian faith community is bound together by the grace of God and structured like the human body, on the basis of life share a common life within the world and rise above the world for its younger generation. Looking at this further, to profess to be a follower of Jesus of Nazareth comes with a new social identity. This implies that reconciliation involves a new social location responding to a counter cultural movement with its personal stake of alienation in a world of tribulation. Jesus said *"They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world"* (John 17:16). Although the Judeo-Christian beliefs present in many national cultures gives me hope that reconciliation can occur through societal entities like the Ghanaian culture; therefore, that a reconciliation ministry is possible through a transitional living program for marginalized young adults' well-being. Of far more interest to me was the community life within the Ghanaian society and culture that promotes harmony and the individual generally tends to depend on such communities. Africans/Ghanaians believe that community is what makes a person and this finds expression in the adage: "I participate,

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[193] Veli-Mati Kärkkäinen, *An Introduction to Ecclesiology: Ecumenical, Historical & Global Perspectives* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 128.

therefore I am."[194] The community helps with the upbringing of children, provides

guidance, values, and protection for its people, unlike the Americans who are

individualistic. But these must be within limits, because the Ghanaian ethnic church

seems ignorant of the struggle of the second-generation Ghanaian Americans have in the

church environment, yet they desire to have them stay as part of the Ghanaian church. As

Serene Jones and Paul Lakeland explain, "Appeals to unity, so important to the life and

reflection of the church, require attention to the effects of racialization, along with other

social markers of marginalization such as class, gender, and ethnicity."[195] It is obvious

that a conservative traditional value system has created the tension of a generation gap.

This has given rise to a different cultural perspective of doing things between the first-

generation ethnic Ghanaian and the second-generation Ghanaian-American. The first-

generation church member has the notion that when the elder/parents speak the young

adults should not complain; it is still ripe and deep-rooted in the culture. For instance, the

notion that there should be respect for the elders; a child cannot talk back when the

elderly is speaking; and a child is always at fault even if the adult is wrong. It is a norm

that the youth should always talk with humility to an adult and in most cases parents

become the final arbiter in marriage choices. Similarly, food as well as funeral taboos

should be honored, against the will of the young adult and is an issue of cultural concern

to the second generation. Undoubtedly, the major problems militating against fruitful

friendship and coexistence of the first-generation ethnic Ghanaian and the second-

generation Ghanaian American are cultural differences, as well as neglect. The first-

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[194] David W. Augsburger, *Pastoral Counseling Across Cultures* (Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox Press, 1986), 82.

[195] Serene Jones and Paul Lakeland, eds., *Constructive Theology: A Contemporary Approach to Classical Themes with Cd-Rom* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2005), 223.

generation Ghanaian church immigrants have the notion of denial. Even though they are living in America as naturalized citizens, they still think they are connected to their homeland in Ghana. But second-generation Ghanaian Americans are more concerned about the social justice issues current in their community and the global world. The second-generation Ghanaian Americans try to contribute their efforts, time, energy in church activities and events to overcome their minority status, thus, fulfilling Augustine of Hippo's declaration that "a true sacrifice is offered in every action which is designed to unite us to God in a holy fellowship."[196] They know that they have been isolated from mainstream American society and being forced to have a Ghanaian identity. In a sense, there is a crisis of identity and the second-generation American is rational in their thinking, as against the conservative culture of their first-generation Ghanaian parents. Rowatt states that "the foundational question in a shepherding response to a teen in crisis involves a polarity between reconciling and healing. What is the goal? The dynamic tension and responds by suggesting the possibility of both. Although healing is the ultimate goal for the individual's relationships to others in the crisis. We want them to get well and get back into healthy relationships with others."[197]

The major reconciliation issue that has invoked my compassion and my site team's determination is to launch an expanded educational initiative by creating a motivating adolescence learning environment, through teaching strategies with incarnational import capable of imparting the second-generation, the church, the community, with "religious ideation of adolescents needs to be assessed in relationship to

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[196] Alister E. McGrath, *The Christian Theology Reader*, 5th ed. (West Sussex, United Kingdom: Wiley-Blackwell, 2016), 320.

[197] Rowatt, *Adolescents in Crisis*, 10.

adolescent spiritual issues."[198] For that reason, there is the urgency to acknowledge the

problem which the Ghanaian culture and acculturation present to the second-generation;

and not to avoid or over-simplify it. Instead, pursue a transformation through a well-

designed religious educational curriculum that provides an opportunity for personality

growth and also impacts a means of production in the educational process of guidance to

the young adults some of whom are undergoing marital challenges. With an act of

humility, brokenness, and grace, both parties need to commit themselves through

dialogue and offer/receive forgiveness in resolving the conflict; paving the way for

motivation that contributes to young adults' achievement and marital success.

"Reconciliation is more than 'shaking if off' with a casual comment. It involves

awareness of the brokenness, confession of one's own participation in the brokenness,

however large or small that might seem, and the giving and receiving of forgiveness."[199]

It is especially important in developing strategies and models of teaching and to examine

the religious course curricula to ensure that the benefits of reconciliation spilled into

marriages and costs of divorce are covered fairly. This promotes resources that support

marriage as a viable and desirable structure within which to raise healthy children as a

means of restoring relations that has been fractured. Such reconciliation initiatives require

trust, built on mutual commitment from both sides as they acknowledge the past and

build a more constructive relationship for the future. Without forgiveness, it is impossible

for reconciliation to take place. And where there has been hurt and misunderstanding,

activism will require reconciliation as a form of community building and sustainable

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[198] Ibid., 50.

[199] Ibid., 11.

peace. As Bosch posits, the church must be a community filled with compassion, and through such compassion we will suffer and bear each other's burdens.[200]

In my privileged position as a pastor/educator, the whole concept of forming educational curricula as practical guidelines for young adults' learning experience demands that I explore various "curricular foundations with a focus on concrete realities and a concern to develop practical guidelines for teaching" the young adults. [201] This is because young adults "experiences are guided in ways that contribute to their information, formation, and transformation."[202] There is no doubt, educators and pastors face the challenges to create an appropriate motivating learning environment with unique teaching strategies, for post-adolescent students (18-24 years) that leads to lifelong learning. The church as a whole seems to wallow in abject fear of change, culminating in the exodus of young adults from the church. Stephen D. Brookfield posits that

> The ground zero of resistance to learning is the fear of change. And learning, by definition, involves change. It requires us to explore new ideas, acquire new skills, develop new ways of understanding old experiences, and so on. No one is the same after learning something. The change might not be very dramatic or even evident. But even incremental and apparently imperceptible change carries its own discomforts.[203]

The current Ghanaian immigrant church seems not to take care of the post-adolescent's own internal desire to learn and achieve. Poorly stated religious education learning objectives has given rise to introducing problematic elements of not allowing

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[200] D. J. Bosch, *The Church as Alternative Community* (Potchefstroom, South Africa: Instituut vir Reformatoriese Studie, 1982), 29.

[201] Robert W. Pazmino, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education: An Introduction in Evangelical Perspective* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 231.

[202] Ibid., 232.

[203] Stephen D. Brookfield, *The Skillful Teacher: On Technique, Trust, and Responsiveness in the Classroom*, 3rd ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2015), 213.

adolescent learners to attach value to new contents. Likewise, instructors/teachers are

demonstrating a lack of the acceptance of change, risk taking, as well as challenging

themselves. Even "theologically trained clergy, religious educators, and curriculum

policy decision makers have withheld from laity the methods and skills to interpret the

scriptures and to engage in theological reflection capable of opening up their deepest

questions and illuminating their most hidden doubts."[204] Many adolescents are at risk of a

major crisis which has an impact on the development of self-identity. Rowatt writes that

"adolescence, the tough and turbulent transition between childhood and adulthood, holds

fascination for children and adults."[205] Right from childhood, children are given to

babysitters to be taken care of, as parents are busy with work and hardly spend quality

time with their own children. To that effect, there is a gradual loss of parental relationship

with their own children as they grow into adulthood and feel they are left alone to figure

out life on their own without any faith development. This brings Fowler's stages of faith

development into focus in which he identifies six stages, through which a pilgrim of faith

invariably travels. Usually, arising in adolescence is the 3rd stage of synthetic-

conventional faith, characterized by conformity to authority and the religious

development of the adolescent.[206] The ego is dominant and the dynamic ground

successfully suppressed, and the adolescent life situations may drive them into despair;

the threshold to the individuative-reflective fourth stage of struggle, in which the

adolescent faces difficult questions regarding identity and beliefs, subject to critical

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[204] Charles R. Foster, *Educating Congregations: The Future of Christian Education* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994), 26.

[205] Rowatt, *Adolescents in Crisis*, 1.

[206] Nancy J. Evans et al., *Student Development in College: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 2nd ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010), 196-197.

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scrutiny. This fourth stage begins the young adult psychic undoing, as his/her cultural/religious example begins to crumble and existential anxiety sets in. Piaget refers to this stage of the period from adolescence through adulthood as the formal operational stage, in which adolescents can think about multiple variables in systematic ways, and think about abstract relationships and concepts.[207] This stage of life and faith development demands that parents become positive role models for these adolescents, because this stage presents them the opportunity of discovering one's own identity. Even the best young adults in the church have been the most vulnerable young adults who are "struggling with significant questions of cultural identity . . . the tensions, contradictions, fears, doubts, hopes and 'deferred' dreams that are part and parcel of living a borrowed and colonized cultural existence,"[208] from the yoke of racism passed down to them in modern American society. However, adolescents in pursuit of life-long educational journey are yearning for religious education curriculum that will help them start family life/marriage, college preparation, morality, financial management, and education on sexuality. Since the student's (church member) willingness, need, and desire to participate in the church's religious educational program seeks to increase the factors that will move him/her towards becoming more involved in the class and the subject matter, with the avowed aim to be successful in the learning process; motivation as a teaching strategy, as it pertains to the learner, is cardinal for transformational development.

Adolescents have a very clear sense that they have suffered more than other age groups, as a result of America's present economic struggles. Similarly, poor and low-

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[207] K. C. Wood, H. Smith, and D. Grossniklaus, "Piaget's Stages of Cognitive Development," in *Emerging Perspectives on Learning, Teaching, and Technology*, ed. Michael Orey, http://epltt.coe.uga.edu/ (accessed June 12, 2017).

[208] Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 11.

income Ghanaian parents in high-poverty minority Bronx neighborhoods suffer unique socio-economic stress, culminating in negative fates of adolescents. Ellen and Turner write that "these characteristics of high-poverty neighborhoods may have deleterious consequences for the cognitive functioning socialization, physical health, emotional functioning, and academic achievement of children and adolescents."[209] Most often, adolescents who grow up in Ghanaian families under economic stress, and with a single parent are poorly supervised, and often, gain autonomy too early. Some adolescents in my church community have become unsupervised adolescents, addicted to drugs/alcohol, depressed, and engaged in risky behaviors of early sexual activity, adolescent pregnancy resulting in lower educational attainment.

Chaotic learning environments "combined with limited parental involvement in adolescents' education, have serious consequences. Not surprisingly, low-income adolescents have reduced achievement motivation and much higher risk of educational failure,"[210] resulting in higher college dropout rates. Meanwhile, those on a college campus learning environment are struggling with what Brookfield called imposition (not intelligent enough to be on college campus and excel); cultural suicide (sharing enthusiasms and success leads to exclusion from families, peers, and communities for what appears to be an act of betrayal); therefore, lost in limbo – experiencing these fluctuations leading to "epistemological panic attack."[211] In this regard, motivation is

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[209] Ingrid Gould Ellen and Margery Austin Turner, "Does Neighborhood Matter? Assessing Recent Evidence," *Housing Policy Debate* 8, no. 4 (2010): 833-866.

[210] Geoffrey F. Schultz, "Socioeconomic Advantage and Achievement Motivation: Important Mediators of Academic Performance in Minority Children in Urban Schools," *Journal of Urban Review* 25, no. 3 (1993): 221-232.

[211] Brookfield, *The Skillful Teacher*, 59-66.

important because it highly contributes to achievements and positive outcome. Human complexity and diverse cultural settings of the Ghanaian immigrant community implies that there is more than one way to motivate adolescent learning. Motivation, according to Maehr and Meyer, is the "personal investment that individual has in reaching a desired state or outcome."[212] Paul D. Eggen and Donald P. Kauchak point out that the motivation to learn is "a student's tendency to find academic activities meaningful and worthwhile and to try and get the intended learning benefits from them."[213]

Motivating an adolescent through teaching strategies within the immigrant Ghanaian Presbyterian Church learning environment starts from a child's perspective, so as to add value to the child through to adulthood. It is based on the New Testament teaching called "*Catechesis*, to refer to the teaching of early apostles…to describe Christian teaching and education."[214] However, it has outlived its usefulness in our contemporary church religious educational setting because teachers choose what and how students will learn, as well as how students will be assessed on their learning.

My unique teaching strategy begins with *"Suaboa"* (Ghanaian language, meaning 'cooperative learning'), that shift the focus of instruction from the teacher to the student, aiming to develop learner independence by putting responsibility for learning path in the hands of the students. However, it starts with the teacher with the intent to satisfy the need to affiliate and provide opportunities for cooperative interaction, while maintaining

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[212] Martin L. Maehr and Heather A. Meyer, "Understanding Motivation and Schooling: Where We've Been, Where We Are, and Where We Need to Go," *Educational Psychology Review* 9, no.4 (1997): 373.

[213] Eggen and Kauchak, *Strategies and Models for Teachers*, 359.

[214] John L. Elias, *A History of Christian Education: Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox Perspectives* (Malabar, FL: Krieger, 2002), 18.

a teaching system of critical thinking skills such as reasoning and problem-solving. Putting students' interests first brings with it the strategy of introducing a liberal model of religious education characterized by "the position that theological constructs are open to continual change….the conviction that religious education is essentially concerned with social and cultural reconstruction."[215] This suggests a curriculum with the aim of reclaiming adolescent Christian heritage, hoping to increase their motivation to bring students to an awareness that God is active in both the church and society at large, as they get involved with God's global mission of the redemption of creation, in order to access their validity in relation to the needs of the other. Curriculum contents include Bible stories, current societal/community issues presented through books, technological media, music, art, etc. This is meant to bring a variety of approaches, such as reflection, case study, and phenomenological methods, etc. to the effect that God can be found not only in the sacred (holy), but in the profane (common) – liberal model. This strategy allows the students to identify their future goals/aspirations and to determine where in the progression of this goal, the present circumstance falls. More importantly, students identifying how biblical principles and values are relevant to the contemporary world, so as to participate in God's global village with transparency (organic) and interact with people of different race, faith, culture, etc. This involves expectancy of others, the teacher's belief to bring about the desired change through the use of *"Suaboa"* teaching strategies to increase the learner's intrinsic motivation, and expectancy of oneself, which is the effect of personal expectancies on one's own behavior through such integration.

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[215] Burgess, *Models of Religious Education*, 80.

Jean Piaget's theory relies heavily on assimilation to intrinsically motivate

students to learn. Piaget himself said "the principal motive power of intellectual activity,

thus becoming the need to incorporate things into the subject's schemata…the basic fact

is the need of such, but rather the act of assimilation."[216] Intrinsic motivation is defined as

"stimulation that drives an individual to adopt or change a behavior for his or her own

internal satisfaction or fulfillment. Intrinsic motivation is usually self-applied and springs

from a direct relationship between the individual and the situation."[217] Essentially,

intrinsic motivation comes about when a person does work of some sort, simply to gain

knowledge and experience from it. There is no physical reward associated with intrinsic

motivation, and for this reason, it is typically the harder motivation to entice people

without the two options. The driving force behind Piaget's theory of intrinsic motivation

is his concept of assimilation – the process of using or transforming the environment so

that it can be placed in preexisting cognitive structures.[218] In my opinion, one problem

with intrinsic motivation is that it will not work for everybody because it has long-term

benefits; it does little for short-term rewards. Not everyone is satisfied by knowing that

their work will help them in the future. Most often, many people need to have an

immediate reward in order to repeat the task, stirring their personal motivation. Personal

motivation, according to J.M. Keller, "will tend to increase with increases in personal

expectancy for success, by using feedback and other devices that help students connect

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[216] B. J. Wadsworth, *Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development* (New York: David McKay, 1971).

[217] Business Dictionary, s. v. "intrinsic motivation," http://www.businessdictionary.com.

[218] R. L. Campbell, *Jean Piaget's Genetic Epistemology: Appreciation and Critique*, http://campber.people.clemson.edu/piaget.html (accessed December 12, 2017), 10.

success to personal effort and ability."[219] Some of the outcomes will assist students to develop skills that will help them deal with challenges in all areas of their lives, especially, the relationship between the students and the educators. The community will be strengthened and they will see the transitional living program more as a place of love and transformation, and less as a place of separation and judgment.

Looking at this further, since the Ghanaian immigrant church is a communal community, adopting a pedagogical approach of relational (narrative method), and incarnational teaching strategy will assist students in understanding their relationship to God and others through Jesus. This is reminiscent of the Ghanaian cultural import of *"Wo ahyia wo Nua"* (Ghanaian Twi language, meaning, "You have met your kind"), that encourages self-motivation, with instructor's use of supportive approach that reinforces learner willingness and enthusiasm. Under this strategy, my teaching metaphor as a farmer comes into play, having the patience to deposit seeds of information with the purpose of illumination and transformation. As a sower facilitator, I am there to bring up what is already within the adolescent, as well as impart knowledge using whatever method necessary to bring the subject content across, being able to make that which is difficult to be understandable. A heart for teaching and for the young adults, a friendly, warm, and welcoming disposition, open to new and imaginative ways of teaching and understanding and are on board with the aims and objectives of the New Wave Care curriculum. This will involve the moral obligation to strategize, plan, motivate, explore, and be knowledgeable of the content and provide a quality learning environment, so as to

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[219] J. M. Keller, "Motivational Design of Instruction," in *Instructional Design Theories and Models: An Overview of their Current Status*, ed. C.M. Reigeluth, 383-434 (Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum, 1983), 420.

develop the inclination for critical thinking for the learner. More importantly, to be sensitive to diverse learning styles and teaching methodologies to contribute to the facilitation of learning among the culturally diverse population of the learners in the Bronx community, calls for a deeper understanding of the challenges within the neighborhood. A sense of compassionate invention, utilizing various strategies such as teaching through auditory, visual, movies, rhythms of songs, dance (like *"Adowa,"* – Ghanaian traditional dance that uses dancing symbols to communicate to audience present), etc., hoping to play an integral role in changing students' transformational journey. Above all, relational teaching that makes the students to know the teacher/pastor as one who is adaptable, sensitive to the needs of the classroom environment, by giving the students the information to come up with their own ability to reach sound conclusions, based on observation and information. Sometimes, sensitivity to the needs of the students implies that lessons will take the shape of discussions instead of lecturing, because that is good for the students at that particular point in time. Hopefully, lessons influence the young adults' lives positively, and the experiences the young adults undergo bring them close to reality and gain wisdom for living. As my Christian mentor used to observe, "Christian content without experience is empty and that experience without content is blind;" transformation motivated by God's truth, enhances an effective curriculum that weds Christian content and experience, thereby potentially life transforming.

Effective planning will serve as my aid for organization and exploration, as well as preparing the young adults to achieve their expectation throughout the period. As the young adults become aware of their expectations, they become challenged and

determined and embrace themselves in taking responsibility to achieve their desired goal. My responsibility as a Christian educator beckons me to decide on a highly technical skills curriculum for study that ensure "educational values and commitments actually become embedded in practice," and essentially implement truth as revealed in scripture through the ministry of the Holy Spirit towards their healthy transformation. Nevertheless, truth devoid of love will adulterate the gospel proclamation and will become unresponsive as we see in our world today of young people being victims. Developing a curriculum to suit the needs of the young adults that nurtures their unique characteristics and provide the appropriate care will help them bloom. The curriculum will be taught in a way that allows the creativity of the young adults to flourish by engaging all of the senses, body movements, and different art forms. Young adults would be queried regularly to determine if aims and goals are being achieved. Furthermore, proper planning entails that the Ghanaian immigrant church leadership and I "identify values in education that are consistent with a Christian world and life view,"[220] which see God from the perspective of a parent who disciples his/her children with love for their own benefit. However, the right to inculcate such discipline in the curriculum planning and teaching can benefit the young adults, if the instructors who are at the helms of affairs make what they teach a lived experience for the young adults to emulate.

Like a pilgrimage, the theological paradigm will help the young adults to see reconciliation as a transformation initiative through a curriculum of religious education, a learning process of journey they are embarking on, so as to arrive at their targeted destination in their life endeavors. Decisions and planning towards such a viable,

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[220] Pazmino, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 243.

sustainable curriculum could only be effective when both theory and practical aspect are harmonized in achieving fruitful educational curriculum foundation, together with its reconciliation gesture. Worth noting is the point that "God's curriculum transcends published or developed materials, and teachers must be flexible in the use and adaptation of the curriculum."[221] A properly designed curriculum that centers on Christian principles spilling into the community with love, liberates, and transforms. Eventually, this will enhance the value of corporate memory in contemporary immigrant Ghanaian church and community looking to preserve its struggling second-generation young adults, for a lasting legacy.

In the final analysis, the teacher/pastor as a motivator should monitor progress to assist adolescents in acquiring self-direction and enhancing the skills within through motivational teaching strategies. This is the ultimate goal of a teacher/pastor, and one which I hope to accomplish through this transitional living program for these marginalized young adults, God being my helper.

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[221] Ibid., 237.

CHAPTER 5
HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Historically, how has the first-generation Ghanaian immigrants' parenthood created marginalization for the second-generation Ghanaian young adults, its effects on their adulthood and how to rehabilitate/resettle these marginalized young adults, age 18-22 years, for effective developments towards a sustainable future?

In the modern global world, the word origin strikes an unfamiliar sound with little known historical connections. Historically significant, is the fact that the first civilization to take Africans out of the African continent was the Arabs. They took Africans from the eastern coast of the continent because it was in the business interest of the Arab enslaver to castrate Africans. Dale T. Irvin and Scott W. Sunquist write that "among Muslims, an enslaved person was to be treated well, and if he or she was not a believer, the owner was to encourage conversion."[222] Then came the Europeans and Africa became the hunting ground for the European colonizers.

> The advance of the Portuguese along the west coast of Africa and then the Spanish across the Atlantic Ocean provided the routes along which the Atlantic slave trade would grow over the next several centuries. Portugal at first controlled it. . . After their initial excursions the Portuguese came to rely less on capturing slaves along the African coast. Instead they came to rely on local African rulers, who traded bodies for European goods such as iron products or cloth, goods that ironically the African nations themselves often already produced. These local rulers in turn engaged in raiding parties directed against neighboring nations or tribes to supply the captives for the European traders, hence giving the Europeans the thin

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[222] Dale T. Irvin and Scott W. Sunquist, *Modern Christianity from 1454-1800*, vol. 2 *History of the World Christian Movement* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2012), 43.

justification that their captives had been legitimately enslaved according to Christian law as prisoners of war. Such rationalizations persisted long into the modern period.[223]

During this era, the ideology of slave inferiority was unknown among black theologians in Roman North Africa. It was until the 15th century when the Portuguese went to Africa that white people came into contact with blacks. That was when Christian slave masters began to subject black people to slavery; voices like William Wilberforce (18th and 19th century) rose up against humankind being treated as slaves and racism reared its head in the Christian faith. Together with the Native American genocide and transatlantic slave trade, this evil phenomenon created unjust structures to inflict suffering on the poor and its pervasive effects of racism in the West.

Most West African second-generation young adults born in America would be surprised to learn that

> Most of the Africans who were enslaved in the United States came from the western part of Africa. Many came from the area near the seacoast, from the Senegal River in the north to the area which is now known as Angola. Others came from Zaire, Nigeria, Ghana, Senegambia, the Ivory Coast, Liberia, and Sudan. Still others were brought from East Africa from Mozambique and Madagascar. Among these ethnic groups were the Wolof, Mandingo, Bambara, and Yoruba, all of whom had a significant Muslim population, as well as the Akan, Kru, Fon, Ibo, and various Kongo people.[224]

From Africa to the United States (diaspora), begins the story of agonizing exile of indigenous Africans reminiscent of what unfolds in glorious exodus under the guidance of Almighty God. This slavery of the indigenous people of Africa to the diaspora marks the ugly beginnings of the institution of slavery in American society, and what is now

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[223] Ibid.

[224] *Holy Bible: African American Jubilee Edition: Contemporary English Version* (New York: American Bible Society, 1999), 19.

known as the history of African Americans. African slave ancestors built America and Europe. When slavery had lost its shine, the Europeans abolished it and replaced it with yet another dreadful pernicious enterprise, the colonization of Africa. This time around, they did not take Africans away. Instead, the colonizers came to Africa and controlled us by imposing colonial rule with its oppressive tendencies. Meanwhile, in the United States of America, more than a century of struggle for socio-economic justice and political emancipation partially brought freedom and justice to the Black American community. "African American slaves were able to create another world, which was countercultural to the white-defined world, complete with their own folklore, spirituals, and religious practice. These strategies for coping with slavery included tales, songs, and prayers….in the midst of a despairing situation,"[225] bringing with it limited success. James Cone states that "the pain of the oppressed is God's pain . . . God in Christ became the suffering servant and thus took the humiliation and suffering of the oppressed into his own history."[226] From Cone's assertion, I am of the opinion that both the oppressed and the oppressor need to be liberated from injustice, pain and inhumane treatment of humanity. For instance, in America, institutional laws were made to promote racism which was responsible for segregation. Ecclesiastically, white people dominated human history for a long period of time. Martin Luther King, Jr. writes: "If our white brothers are to master fear, they must depend not only on their commitment to Christian love but also on the Christlike love that the Negro generates toward them."[227] King's contention is that through black America's commitment to love and to nonviolence will the fear embedded

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[225] Parker, *Trouble Don't Last Always*, 148.

[226] James H. Cone, *God of the Oppressed*, rev. ed. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1997), 175.

[227] Martin Luther King, Jr., *Strength to Love* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010), 126.

in the white community be dissolved. Given that whites may fear retaliation, King believes the black community must show that there is nothing to fear because African Americans are willing to forgive and willing to forget the past. "The Negro must convince the white man that he seeks justice for both himself and the white man."[228] It is through the same introverted self-reflection that the oppressed can cultivate the qualities of seeing one's face before his parents were born — an identity entirely void of racial, gender or archetypal notions; it is an existence without illusion. For Dr. King, seeking beyond this illusion and creating a new archetype begins with love: "Hatred and bitterness can never cure the disease of fear; only love can do that. Hatred paralyzed life: love releases it. Hatred confuses life; love harmonizes it. Hatred darkens life; love illumines it."[229]

The twenty-first century marks the beginnings of the influx of a new exodus of Africans to the diaspora, in search of bright life – "the American Dream." Deeply rooted in the destiny of the most powerful nation on this earth is the notion of the "American Dream" and its Puritan millennial aspirations as part of being a "Redeemer Nation," as a force that patrols the global world in which we live today. It is a Puritan vision of a millennial kingdom and the idea of being "a city upon a hill," the founding fathers of this nation fought for the American Dream — of freedom, equality of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." American exceptionalism is the idea that we are a redeemer nation and a city upon a hill, and if we fail God we will be disgraced. This is the driving force behind American greatness that stresses egalitarianism, and especially materialism.

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[228] Ibid.

[229] Ibid.

Depending on countless goals that are specific to each individual, including immigrants, this great social ideal calls for hard work, discipline, persistence, good ethical values, and morality as guiding principles in achieving this great ambition. The American Dream is therefore rooted in the notion that this is a promised land full of milk and honey. This is a land of dreams and anybody can make it, which is not the Franciscan vision but that of the Puritans. Therefore, many immigrants come to the United States for a better and more successful life. New immigrants bring with them their cultural norms, diverse religions and ethnic identities to the United States. Moses O. Biney posits that

> among these newer immigrants are those from Ghana. The majority of Ghanaian immigrants in the United States arrived here since the late 1980s. Like most other African immigrant groups, only a handful immigrated between 1950 and 1980. They were mainly college, university and seminary students who had decided to stay after finishing their studies, and others who came to join to their families. Since the passing of the Immigration Act of 1990, which created the Diversity Visa Program, a larger number of Ghanaians have been admitted as legal permanent residents into the United States.[230]

"By the 1990s, the first wave of West African settlers, whether arriving as students, refugees, or lottery holders, or through other means, was starting to become naturalized and as American citizens could begin to develop a network that world facilitate further immigration by sponsoring immediate family members, including spouses, children, and parents, under the standard provisions of family reunification."[231] In addition, Ian E. A. Yeboah notes that "immigrations of Ghanaians is both a nuclear and extended family decision with males taking the lead, followed by their wives, children, and then extended family members on both sides."[232]

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[230] Biney, *From Africa to America*, 11-12.

[231] Halter and Johnson, *African and American*, 23.

[232] Yeboah, *Black African Neo-Diaspora*, 48.

According to the Census Bureau data from 2010 and 2011, more than 50 million legal and illegal immigrants and their U.S. born children (under age 18) live in the US.[233] Africans are part of the immigrants living in the United States and from the census data of 2009, the top five countries of African immigrants in the United States were Nigeria, Ethiopia, Egypt, Ghana, and Kenya.[234] A historical, progressive journey made up of acceptance, adaptation, and integration, within an intercultural setting. However, challenges would become real on a foreign soil while trying to move from acceptance to adaptation. Milton J. Bennett explains that it is within the adaptation level in which a person is familiar with another culture, yet not abandoning their own culture to assimilate into another culture.[235]

The most challenging considerations for some Africans, in moving along the scale of competency from acceptance to adaptation would engage their ability to accept various cultural practices outside of their African traditional systems, customs, and practices. It is highly probable that ethical considerations birth from their own social location would prevent them from "accepting" (Milton Bennet addresses this complication) some forms of cultural and traditional customs and practices of another culture.[236] For instance, the practice of young girls under the age of 14 being contracted into marriage and

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[233] Stephen Camarota, *Immigrants in the United States, 2010: A Profile of America's Foreign-Born Population* (Washington, DC: Center for Immigration Studies, 2012), https://www.cis.org/sites/cis.org/files/articles/2012/immigrants-in-the-united-states-2012.pdf.

[234] Kristen McCabe, "African Immigrants in the United States," Migration Policy Institute, July 21, 2001, http://www.migrationinformation.org/usfocus/display.cfm?ID=847 (accessed December 12, 2017).

[235] Milton J. Bennett, "Becoming Interculturally Competent," in *Towards Multiculturalism: A Reader in Multicultural Education*, 2nd ed., ed. J. Wurzel (Newton, MA: Intercultural Resource Corporation, 2004), 70-71.

[236] Ibid., 69.

subsequently impregnated sends up red flags. Equally difficult would be a culture in which the women are allowed to have more than one husband. Patriarchal customs and practices of restricting women from education, along with tax attitudes towards violence against women, including rape, murder, and physical disfiguring are unacceptable to most Africans.

What could be the likely causes of recent new wave of exodus of Africans to the West? Internal conflicts fueling in some African nations whose presidents don't want to relinquish power at the end of their political term in office; inter-tribal war in South Sudan, the youngest nation in Africa, which has claimed many innocent lives; the unrest in Somalia, Libya, Eritrea, Kenya, Egypt, Mali, Burkina Faso, etc., gives rise to many prevailing questions that come to mind. Is Africa at war with herself? As W.E.B. Du Bois pointed out, "how shall man measure progress there, where the dark-faced Josie lies? How many heartfuls of sorrow shall balance a bushel of wheat? How hard a thing is life to the lowly, and yet how human and real! And all this life and love and strife and failure, —is it the twilight of nightfall or the flush of some faint-dawning day?"[237] What will happen if founding fathers of African nations like President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Patrick Lumumba of Congo, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Nelson Mandela of South Africa, etc. were to rise up from their grave and see what is happening today? They will be confronted with the discomfort of young men and women who have no interest and love for their African country, and are constantly humiliated at embassies of European countries and the United States of America as they seek the "almighty" green card. Being denied such travel documents have led these young men and women from Nigeria,

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[237] W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk: The Dawn of Freedom* (Colorado Springs, CO: CreateSpace, 2015), 50.

Gambia, Niger, Ghana, Senegal, Mauritania, etc. to navigating unlawful routes through the Sahara Desert; some to eventually drown in the Mediterranean as they seek to be enslaved in Europe and America. Young adults who have lost their self-pride and are not proud of their own culture-theaters and drama, celebrate Western celebrities instead of their own celebrities; sing praises of football teams in Europe and America, and when they fry potatoes in African countries they call them "French fries."

Could Africans be known as authors of their own misfortune? Herman J. Cohen explains that "listening to Africa's founding fathers, as I have over thirty-eight years, the dominant message is clear. Our peoples are immature. They are not ready to be given responsibility for our nations' economic progress. We need to provide close guidance and exercise control."[238] Africans, who do not tell Africa's stories, but are told by CNN in America and Radio France or BBC in Europe. The western media have told African stories, according to a western agenda, so as to benefit from Africa. The time is ripe for Africans to tell their own stories positively and understandably to benefit our own agenda. This should be the work of journalists, writers, reporters, entertainers, film makers, and emerging projects like transitioning living program for young adults in the diaspora, with its rich content of transformation. Why must we remind ourselves of these realities? Because throughout the ages of civilization, the source of battles has always been the battle of the mind; if your mind is conquered, the oppressor gains the upper hand, which is why in the ages of enlightenment the great Rene Descartes said "*cogito ergo sum*… I think, therefore I am."[239] Africa must begin to think if it wants to make

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[238] Herman J. Cohen, *The Mind of the African Strongman: Conversations with Dictators, Statesmen, and Father Figures* (Washington, DC: New Academia Publishing, 2015), 1.

contribution to their affairs and image on the global front. America's branding marketing empire has made the United States seems like it's the best place in the world to be – is the land of the free and home of the brave where nationalities go to chase their dreams.

Culturally, the first-generation Ghanaian immigrants came to America with what Matthew Kim calls "national identity carried over from their home land,"[240] to preserve their communal ethnicity. Community life within the Ghanaian immigrant society and culture promotes solidarity, cooperation, and harmony. This concept of collectivism which is given a high level of conformity in pursuing goals, in the first-generation Ghanaian cultural setup, was used as a means to establish Ghanaian immigrant community in the diaspora. As Daniel Ramirez puts it, "regardless of their immigration status," they saw opportunities in this collectivism to evangelize their own wherever they went and established many communities and churches in America.

Afe Adogame explores the typology of African-led churches in the diaspora and how they have come "to represent a very significant factor in the contemporary life of the new African diaspora in Europe and the United States… The Nigerian and Ghanaian Christian initiatives represent two of the largest most widespread."[241] The Ghanaian religious community represents the mainstream churches, independent ministries, fellowship groups, etc. with an increasing number of Ghanaian clergy ministering solely to Ghanaian groups, and in a few instances, multi-racial groups.

[239] Rene Descartes, *Discourse On the Method of Rightly Conducting the Reason: and Seeking Truth in the Sciences* (Colorado Springs, CO: CreateSpace, 2015), 1.

[240] Matthew D. Kim, "Possible Selves: A Homiletic for Second Generation Korean American Churches," *Homiletics* 32, no. 1 (Sum 2007): 1.

[241] Afe Adogame, *The African Christian Diaspora: New Currents and Emerging Trends in World Christianity* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 52.

Parents Role in Church Building

Overall, about two-thirds of the Ghanaian immigrant church force have been, and correctly are, female. Many ecclesiastical observers may agree with me that women outnumber men in almost every Ghanaian community gathering including Sunday church attendance. The more difficult work there is in the church, the more likely women are to volunteer to do it. As my pastor friend concludes from his experience "that women are the best choice for difficult, important work, because I have found that in these situations, women will never give up. Men are good for building up the work, but women are best for persevering, when men get discouraged."[242] In one aspect of what this pastor friend said, I can infer that there have been few undocumented immigrants in my church who have been exemplary in the course of the last eight years, attesting to his claim. They possess persevering spirit, full of dedication and faithfulness, which women throughout history have shown, will set the standard. Some of these single women are building upon a foundation of interpersonal relationships and Bible knowledge to effectively reach out to other minorities in the neighborhood. These few women have been accepted as loving, caring sisters by the church who give high priority to their welfare. Interestingly enough, despite the dominant male leadership that many Ghanaian immigrant churches boost of and using men, some of the best lay evangelists are all women, doing the most cutting-edge ministry; but an equally exciting call to fulfilling life for women and men in God's missionary enterprise in the diaspora. However, in spite of these faithful women demonstrating a holistic approach with emphasis on both evangelism and human needs, not enough time is given to helping their children's school assignments in the home.

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[242] Comments made to me by a friend pastor, March 2016.

Since they were less involved in their kids' educational activities and more focused on church activities, a greater number of their kids did not get promoted to the next grade.

The idea that these women were more focused on denominational activities to the neglect of their children's education, to the extent that some mothers don't check on the absenteeism of their kids, was unknown to me. Follow-ups to their schools revealed shocking discoveries from their school counselors that for the past three years, their poor school attendance mitigated that they won't qualify to take the final exams to graduate from high school. The role of these women in the church activities is incomplete, expectantly awaiting the contribution of pastoral counseling so that they can mobilize their knowledge, skills, intuitiveness, their own distinctive fervor to the work of God, while at the same time taking care of the home and the kids. The American living standard is too vast to pursue without merging the human and spiritual resources together so as to harvest this land of equal opportunities for their children's purposes.

A similar issue is raised by a faction of young adults in Trinity Presbyterian Church in regard to their mothers who are involved in residential nursing jobs. They hardly come home, and perhaps much more, some parents come home twice in every three months – instances where grandmother is caretaker of the home because it has become a sense of mutual responsibility in the extended family. Lesslie Newbigin states that "for the African society the human person is seen as a partner in a whole network of relationships binding him or her horizontally across a widely extended family . . . To be human is to be part of this closely women fabric of relationships."[243] I have suggested that one of the antidotes to curbing this menace is for those parents to engage in an

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[243] Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989), 187-188.

educational pursuit that will bring skill to their human resources, for better job

opportunities, knowing that education is job security. I am not in any way diminishing

their current residential nursing job (popularly known as "live-in," among Ghanaian

immigrants); a closer look at it reveals the degree of marginalization that has disabled

these young adults' possible bright future in the diaspora. If I am not mistaken, the

conflict between the husband at home and the wife who stays in such residential job for 6

months only communicating to her husband on the phone is profoundly weakening their

marriage, apart from the kids' future aspirations.

Current Settings

"Immigrants are found more in unskilled employment and often have temporary

and part-time work."[244] Within an extended framework, Ghanaian traditional norms

assume that parents may provide support to their children in anticipation of receiving

support back from those children when parents are old or need them.[245] According to

Monica Kirkpatrick Johnson, "Parents may also invest in their young adult children's

success because successful adult children give more support to parents."[246] Although

"offspring who have received more assistance during young adulthood have been shown

to provide more support to older parents later,"[247] Ghanaian parents invest in how their

children do in life as a part of their own legacy. "They measure their own success as

parents in terms of children's achievements and thus are negatively affected by the

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[244] Berry et al., *Immigrant Youth in Cultural Transition*, 27.

[245] Johnson, "Parental Financial Assistance," 713-733.

[246] Ibid.

[247] Ibid.

problems of their adult children."[248] The Ghanaian extended family system requires them

to work hard and take care of one's nuclear family, vis-à-vis the extended family. This

brings untold financial hardship on the Ghanaian male adult making him use alcohol. For

those who are able to cope with such financial challenges in meeting those needs back

home, the economic/financial gains derived from this country have consumed them to get

busier, forgetting about their personal health. L. A. Rehbun believes that immigrants who

have poor financial resources and are economically disadvantaged can be at a greater risk

for substance use.[249] Steven A. Camarota's census bureau report in 2010 show that 23

percent of immigrants and their US-born children (under 18) lived in poverty.[250] This puts

the 23 percent of immigrants at a greater risk of substance abuse based on Rehbun's

report.[251] Magafia and Hovey found that recent immigrants are more vulnerable to

psychosocial stressors such as hardships, demands, frustrations, threats, or other

conditions that challenge people's adaptive capacities.[252] These stressors are associated

with depression, anxiety and substance use.[253] Elder et al. states that immigrants often

face language and communication barriers, cultural differences, discrimination, lack of

social support, difficulties related to access to health care and poverty.[254] He found that

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[248] Ibid.

[249] L. A. Rebhun, "Substance Use among Immigrants to the United States," in *Handbook of Immigrant Health*, ed. Sana Loue, 493-519 (New York: Springer Science & Business, 1998).

[250] Camarota, *Immigrants in the United States*.

[251] Rebhun, "Substance Use Among Immigrants," 493-519.

[252] Cristina G. Magaña and Joseph D. Hovey, "Psychosocial Stressors Associated with Mexican Migrant Farmworkers in the Midwest United States," *Journal of Immigrant Health* 5, no. 2 (2003): 75-86.

[253] Ibid.

[254] John P. Elder et al., "Predictors of Cigarette and Alcohol Susceptibility and Use among Hispanic Migrant Adolescents," *Preventive Medicine* 31, no. 2 (Aug 2000): 115-123.

addressing these challenges can reduce the rate of alcohol and substance use among immigrants. There has been a lot of concern expressed about the deterioration of living standards of Ghanaian adults; yet very little has been directed toward the transformation of these young adults. Given the decline of their educational enhancement and the increase in violence, addiction, school dropouts, and out-of-wedlock births, as well as divorce rate among the Ghanaian middle class and its relationship to societal problems should become the priority of all.

Some Ghanaian parents' job schedules fluctuate to the extent that hardly do they find a day off from work to have quality time with their kids or young people, let alone even attend parent-teacher association (P.T.A.) meetings or visit them at college campuses to encourage them in their academic pursuits. For young people pursuing higher education, this violation of family expectations seems to demoralize their educational aspirations. Most young people share the expectation that their parents will support them and even help pay for college. In this regard, levels of educational developments among Ghanaian newcomers to the diaspora are being sacrificed on the altar of low job opportunities, as against "a 2009 national marketing survey of African consumers revealed that the most prevalent reason given by the newcomers for why they migrated to the United States was for educational opportunity…according to U.S. Census Bureau findings, the educational attainment of Africans, both first and second generations, was higher than that of any other group, native – or foreign-born."[255] As such, the consequences of parental neglect in such educational enterprises have more harmful effects for their college students, inciting young adults' relationships with their

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[255] Halter and Johnson, *African and American*, 22.

parents to be false. Various young adult problems have affected parents' well-being and relationships with others. Being arrested for engaging in the identity theft scam business, getting fired and other experiences that are not generally good for Ghanaian culture of shame and honor have not prompted parental support. Can the Ghanaian immigrant community digest the plain fact that the entire Ghanaian immigrant community is grappling to come to terms with the fact that these are elements of the young adult transformation we despise; yet, it will clearly have a negative impact on their parents' old age care. This question of historical setbacks of marginalized Ghanaian young adults is of the utmost importance for the Ghanaian immigrants' churches, the clergy, and community leaders, to gain understanding of how parental involvement has not been effective in rehabilitating/resetting young adults.

Historically, the Ghanaian immigrant church which has been in the frontline of promoting the mandate of the Great Commission, encouraged the community through the preaching of the gospel, have not been successful in implementing any social action plan to help revamp the young adults. However, the preaching of the gospel cannot be done without assuming the causes of justice. The Great Commission is to provide the church with opportunities to preach the gospel and help the oppressed. The church has a corporate and collective nature which is absolutely essential to its true being. Rather than saving humanity, it assumes a "symbol in which God manifests Godself, heart, desire and passion for the whole community order."[256] "A look at the history of its formation, membership, organizational structure, and the nature of its worship services reveals a church that belongs to two worlds—the African and the American. Though

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[256] Elaine Padilla, "The Practice of Prophetic Ministry," lecture notes, November 10, 2014.

geographically sited in America, like its members the church has an African soul. This is reflected in the rituals of the church and the worldviews which drive them, as well as the ritual languages."[257]

The persistence of chaos, poverty, ineffective leadership, disunity, and despair, remains evident in the Ghanaian society, resulting in our inability to mobilize the community for any positive development that enhances the well-being of the young adults. For instance, "community life within the PCGNY is characterized by both cohesion and conflict. Central to this dialectic are the relationships between men and women, and also those between the young and the old. The nature of these relationships often reflects the cohesiveness or chaos inherent in the congregation."[258] Over the last few years, the elite and middle-income Ghanaian workers in the United States have been channeling their enormous economic and financial resources to their native country for their own personal viable projects. As a result, the Ghanaian immigrant community seems to have abdicated its responsibility to help these marginalized young adults, let alone develop a comprehensive and coherent plan towards their transformation and sustainability.

From the Ghanaian traditional perspectives, apart from the element of race, kingship, and tribal community in the structuring of human life, the family plays a vital part in the nurturing the developing of an authentic home. It was therefore with good intention that first generation Ghanaian parents are given job opportunities in America – the land of opportunity, to cater for their second-generation Ghanaian young adults,

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[257] Biney, *From Africa to America*, 101.

[258] Ibid., 120.

including their end of year tax benefits. But when this good provision was given as a privilege and as a part of the American Dream for their kids' sustainable future, not subject to responsibility and accountability, it became what I call "justice sacrifice" on the altar of selfishness.

Chance seems to be a fundamental element in this reliant universe which God has created. In the past, Ghanaian travelers who came to America in the early sixties made it into what the American song writer Jimmy Cliff echoed: "Struggling man had the right to live." Chance of job changes in the transmissions of struggling money becomes the purchasing power governing the emergence of life in which cars and personal items were shipped to Ghana as a show of pride and prosperity. In this current experience of technological advancement, the chance workings of "the land of equal opportunities – a meritocracy in which everyone can reach their goals and realize their aspirations if they simply work hard and take advantage of the opportunities that surround them,"[259] become the invisible hand of God which miraculously converts their young adults' destiny into a better future.

Presently, this limited parental care ruling over the affairs of these young adults speak of injustice considering the state of our young adults in the Ghanaian community of America. This can be called unjust because they are the work of conscious human agency of some Ghanaian immigrant parents, due to result of wrong choices. Thus, in our historical life endeavor in America first generation Ghanaian parents are no longer responsible to their parental duties; true and false, they are not responsible at all, for educational life has been handed to the "goddess mammon." It is not difficult to

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[259] Abby Ferber et al., *The Matrix Reader: Examining the Dynamics of Oppression and Privilege* (New York: McGraw-Hill Education, 2009), 1.

recognize that one of the worldly riches and powers of which Jesus speaks is mammon (money), perhaps an example of worldly riches and powers of our time, which seems to measure Ghanaian parents' wealth in terms of real goodness and happiness. In the vision of the Ghanaian parents in search of bright life in "the City on the Hill,"[260] money has truly become a fetish (*akom*), a power which demands and receives absolute devotion, but terribly powerful evil force that controls these parents' actions to the neglect of their kids growing into adulthood. True and false, these described as happening in Ghanaian parental care are real and contemporary. They are at the heart of the parents' business as Christians, spilling into the Ghanaian immigrant community/church and, fomenting conflicts, chaos, disputes, sometimes ending up in the American law courts for redress.

The first generation tends to place a high value on group harmony and solidarity, and have a tendency to conform to group norms. Respectfulness and cooperation are common collective traits in the Ghanaian family-oriented structure. However, the second-generation Ghanaian Americans do not see themselves in the category of this family-oriented pattern. Instead, they see themselves in the American culture of individualism, which is more of a western phenomenon as author Augsburger emphasizes in Chapter 3 of *Pastoral Counseling Across Cultures*. In collectivism, everything is toward the family, because the social pattern places the highest value in the interest of the group. The concept of morality, idealism, self-preservation, and duty to your parents first, are important core values in the decision-making process of the Ghanaian cultural value system. This is opposed to the American cultural value system embraced by the second-generation Ghanaian American in which the culture is shaped by the individual's

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[260] John Winthrop, *A Model of Christian Charity* (New York: Evergreen Review, 2009).

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invention, technology, production and financial gain. To the second-generation

Ghanaian-American, ancestries are given at birth and are recipients of their ethnicity.

Yet, they find themselves in dual cultural system; that of American and Ghanaian culture.

Most often, these second-generation Ghanaian-Americans are perceived by people as

strangers and foreign-born citizens, even though they know within themselves they are

American born and speak English fluently without any accent. Even when their parents

take them to Ghana, their country of origin, the native Ghanaians see these second-

generation Ghanaian-Americans as more immersed in the American culture than the

Ghanaian culture. There is the tendency to be envious, judgmental, and critical of their

Americanized way of life. Sometimes they are even embarrassed publicly on these home

visits. This epitomizes the struggles the second-generation Ghanaian-American goes

through, in terms of identity.

Unfortunately, the irreligious and disconnected youths have taken a harsh and

opposing view of religion. They are leaning towards atheism, derogatory in their

approach and taken a more antagonistic attitude towards religion. They hate religious

people and anything that has to do with religion, and have even gone to the extent of

destroying religious things. Others, in spite of their sense of spirituality will want to

ignore these religious institutions which they see as hypocritical and may want to have a

relationship with what they call a higher power, rather than go to church. Some just don't

care about religion or anything relating to such institutions. In his book, *The Sacred

Canopy*, Peter Berger argues that some of the trends regarding youth in the church can be

traced to Martin Luther's Reformation. "At the risk of some simplification, it can be said

that Protestantism divested itself as much as possible from the three most ancient and

most powerful concomitants of the sacred-mystery, miracle, and magic."[261] They

disconnected them as part of trying to get away from the Roman Catholic Church. To

them, all these things are not necessary and therefore discounted the use of the rosary,

incantations, modes of prayer, monks, and the whole question of whether one can pray

for somebody to get healed. All these are seen as signs of primitive life because the

Protestant attitude towards religion was knowledge and intellectualism. I'm not disputing

the fact that Christians should use their knowledge and intellect in serving God, but the

Protestant movement gave a new standard devoid of spirituality and mystery. According

to Berger, this partly led to secularization where religion was pushed to the background,

and even the argument in the 1960s and 1970s was that religion was going to die. As

science improved, there is this notion that religion was no longer going to be relevant

because people were not going to use religion as ways of understanding the world. As a

result, we are experiencing an era of young adults who do not want to have anything to

do with religion. How do we now get the youth back into our churches, knowing that we

have already told them that knowledge and intellectualism define religion, devoid of

spirituality and mystery? Post-modern youth want to see a relationship between what the

adult Christian professes and is in harmony with what they actually do. In a sense, they

are looking for people who could be mentors for them and can offer trusting relationships

of care and accountability. Instead, they attend church only to realize that the adults say

one thing in their profession of faith, and the moment they get out from the church they

do something different. This needs a Christian-lived experience on the part of their

parents, as a means of liberating the young adults.

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[261] Peter L. Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (New York: Anchor, 1990), 111.

Partial views of this liberating movement can be noticed in both the First and Second Testaments, which according to twentieth century theologian Karl Barth must inform the Christian experience of God.[262] Sound doctrine should correspond to the content of biblical witness. The Book of Exodus portrays that God not only moves in response to the pain of humanity by calling Moses to lead the oppressed out of misery, suffering and bondage (Exodus 1:11); but God hears the cries of the oppressed in the midst of human tragedy and cruelty (Exodus 3:7).

The Gospel of Luke informs us that Jesus of Nazareth led a movement of transformation and reconciliation, which brought good news to the poor; a movement that proclaims release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, and freedom for the oppressed (Luke 4:16-18); a movement of transformation that continues to change the world 2000 years after Jesus' death and ascension to heaven. This divine presence continues to liberate people from oppression and calls these marginalized young adults to lead humanity toward salvation. That God moves in the lives of the poor, disenfranchised, the rejected, as well as human history signals that God is an inclusive God. This inclusive God is reminding the immigrant church that Christian mission and duty work hand-in-hand.

A historical reflection postulates that there is the need to encourage critical thinking and persistent enquiry, both personal and communal, as prevailing challenges will require a vision beyond the now in my prophetic imagination and agency, in fixing broken systems. As Laurel Dykstra and Ched Myers explain, we cannot find sane solutions until we pay attention to the truth that underlines the vision of a Beloved

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[262] Stanley J. Grenz, *Rediscovering the Triune God: The Trinity in Contemporary Theology* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2004), 37.

Community.[263] A community of diverse marginalized young adults desiring transformative leadership of mentorship and a nurturing environment will enable the Ghanaian immigrant leadership to pinpoint a situation that leaves the deepest mark on the generation of these disadvantaged young adults and their life aspirations.

Creating a leadership environment in which the gifts of the Spirit may flourish and redefining my voice of compassion to liberate the second generation of marginalized young adults to imagination, calls for embarking on effective leadership of empowering these disaffected young adults to realize their own calling and gifts, and to facilitate opportunities in which others can flourish to make the unknown knowable. This is important to my demonstration project because prophetic task is engaging in witnessing and exegeting the lost, thus, immersing myself in salvation history. As Dykstra and Myers posit "that appropriation of the category of 'struggle' as the epistemological lens through which I view the biblical text – and the world – has come naturally to me."[264] In other words, there is a loss of understanding of the young adult generation, and a loss of a covenantal society that has a safe net for future generation's prosperity and success. In a sense, winnings are in God's hands and witnessing is in the hands of the prophet.

Our contemporary diverse world at the turn of the millennium demands a diversity-centered leadership whose prophetic agency upholds transformational and servant-leadership acumen lived through incarnational theology based on "wounded-healer" ministry, with the intent of celebrating differences that brings corporate fulfillment. This supports Laurel Dykstra and Ched Myers' notion that "empathetic

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[263] Laurel Dykstra and Ched Myers, ed., *Liberating Biblical Study: Scholarship, Art, and Action in Honor of the Center and Library for the Bible and Social Justice* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011), 219-220.

[264] Ibid., 120.

servant leaders demonstrate that they truly understand what followers are thinking and feeling."[265] An effort, aimed at seeking a new openness to God's mission as well as educational mission of the church in the world to people everywhere and to all creation. This brings with it obedience to Christ and to a more joyous celebration in worship, work and community, where people of all ages, races, ethnicities, are made one in Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit for a new humanity. This eliminates modern church flaws.

Charles R. Foster calls flaws and challenges in our modern church "faith illiteracy"[266] because the leadership has failed to realize how individual attendees were longing for a relationship with God, not just a superficial service attendance twice a year.[267] Ultimately, there is a significant educational mission of the church which has a larger sphere of influence reminiscent of Marin Luther's educational paradigm of aiming towards the marginalized of the society.

Martin Luther through the Protestant Reformation initiated an educational structure in which people responded to the call to serve humanity and in the wider world. In addition, Luther's educational paradigm of aiming at the poor young adults was essential and the most effective way of promoting the reform movement, as against the humanists like Erasmus and others relegating education to the upper and middle classes. John L. Elias explains that "Luther focused on the education of the young because he believed that this emphasis would be the most effective way of promoting the ideals of his reform movement."[268] In a sense, Luther is not just embarking on an educational shift

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[265] Northouse, *Leadership*, 227.

[266] Foster, *Educating Congregations*, 51.

[267] Ibid., 53.

[268] Elias, *A History of Christian Education*, 87.

but also advocating overturn of the economic, gender, and class order. This made Luther's contributions far more significant than we can even imagine because the marginalized and the poor were not among those who were being considered as a part of the renaissance education. Instead the upper and middle classes were the beneficiaries. Paulo Freire argues that "education is suffering from narration sickness."[269] According to Charles Foster, such suffering militating against effective church education program is threatened by internal and external forces that have diminished the efficiency of established church education and resulted in a generational gap that exists between the youth and elders of the church. This has led to both having separatist visions for the future of the church. Meanwhile, the church creates opportunities for education based on the reflection of a few individuals in the "inner-circle" or eldership as opposed to a deeper understanding and implementation of church educational activities based on congregational analysis. Such activities that focus on Bible story reenactments instead of knowledge from the Word of God to build "faith knowledge" are not attainable.[270] Repetitive religious events may perpetuate the ignorance and "faith illiteracy,"[271] plaguing the churches today, where there are more "hearers" than "doers" of the Word. This phenomenon is hard to grasp in our modern "seeing is believing" world, and asserts that in every facet of secular life, the notion of seeing before believing is held in high regard.[272] This in a sense doesn't shape the community's social life and faith, thereby transforming, especially the inner being of the poor in the community.

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[269] Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 71.

[270] Foster, *Educating Congregations*, 54.

[271] Ibid.

[272] Ibid., 57-58.

Luther's reforms paved the way for the poor to have access to education as a right, a prerogative once reserved for the rich. Today, the poor and the marginalized can boast of free education in most advanced and Third-World countries. Further, Luther's belief in this partnership of religion and education graciously brought equal opportunities for both the rich and the poor and that education of the young was the avenue through which the Gospel of Jesus Christ could be advanced. It is therefore not surprising that Luther's reform goal is found in an epitaph that says "the neglect of education is the greatest ruin to the Gospel."[273] The teaching dimensions of the Church are not only meant to bring transformation but are necessary in carrying out the mission of the Church. Today, it is unfortunate that many religious communities discount education in favor of traditional rituals, forgetting that the mission and mandate of the Church is to disciple all nations.

Without a doubt, Luther's reforms outline his vision of public system of education with its religious values, though there is no separation of Church and State. Later, this Eurocentric model of public national system of education assumed a compulsory education, especially with the Catholic schools in British Commonwealth nations in Africa and the Caribbean States. For that reason, Luther's contributions shook the conservative social hierarchy of his era to its foundational core. Moreover, Luther's educational curriculum system rooted in classical languages and Hebrew were geared toward studying scripture and understanding it more perfectly, especially in theological institutions. Specifically, in the Presbyterian Church, one is made to take Hebrew and Greek as a requirement for ordination into ministry. Luther's introduction of big and

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[273] Tamara Henry, "History and Philosophy of Religious Education," lecture, New York Theological Seminary, March 16, 2015.

small catechisms that are concise summaries of Christian teaching, depicting certain aspects of Christian faith became a fundamental Christian training manual for pastors and teachers, and the first of its kind for children. While growing in the Presbyterian Church, the small catechism became a systematic approach of Christian education to train young adults; and the big catechism is for the training of pastors and teachers. As a result, education has helped significantly the vocation of the teacher being comparable to the vocation of the preacher (the teaching elder and the ruling elder are held in common in the Presbyterian Church).

In evaluating most the contemporary church in terms of understanding our Christian faith, young adults don't know how to articulate their faith, and even the adults are lacking. Charles Foster's statement that "ignorance diminishes community identity and purpose"[274] supports my notion that if the community is informed through church education, the community will be enabled to discover who they are and where they belong. As the community discovers who they are in the light of Christian education, they will recover from the loss of corporate memory that has to do with lack of continuity. Eventually, this informs us of the legacy the elders of the church will leave behind for the younger generation towards a sustainable future of the church mission and vision based on biblical truth. This averts a generational disconnection, not only in the local church, but also in the community as well. Foster therefore puts it in the right perspective when he envisioned that through the youth ministry in the church "the elders envision the community's continuity and renewal," and by so doing the youth discover "the meaning

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[274] Foster, *Educating Congregations*, 60.

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and power of events central to the identity and mission of the church." [275] In my perspective, this transitional living program has brought attentiveness to the relationship of Trinity Presbyterian Church and the Bronx Community through a dialogue of speaking and listening to each other.

This Catechism became the checks in Christian education with a principle guiding text in which children graduate from Sunday School with basic levels of knowledge of some doctrinal themes of scripture like the Second Coming, an aspect of their Christian faith. Today is not like that in our churches. Even people who call themselves Christians will publicly acknowledge that they have not even heard about some segments of doctrinal teachings of their Christian faith. An alarming absence of scriptural readings and teachings is prevalent today in our churches. Luther has created a systematic approach to Christian education for the young as well as the elder. So, these two Catechisms are fundamental because it became a wakeup call for the Roman Catholic Church, as they realized that is not just a preaching discourse. Instead, Luther was advocating a systematic approach to doing things and this strengthens his reforms. Today, the Christian humanist perspective seems to shape a lot of seminary curricula, as homiletics and preaching hold a central place in their theological curriculum. Yolanda Y. Smith explains that "building a triple-heritage model of Christian education is incorporating effective curriculum resources."[276] Reminiscent of the Augustinian monk emphasis on arts, singing, instruments and poetry has helped cultivate a holistic persona,

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[275] Ibid., 62.

[276] Smith, *Reclaiming the Spirituals*, 149.

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which is central to the preparation of ministers; obviously differing from the scholastics in terms of their interpretations of Aristotle being a central kind of logical power.

The emergence of this period in which the reformers advance a return to original sources gave root to teaching and the educational aspect of the ministry. Up until that point it was not a consideration, and Luther's Catechism echoes a kind of theology that undergirds the reformation of churches, in a sense that preaching the Word of God comes with a call to response, thus a faithful obedience and response to that call. To Luther, we are educated so that people can discover their call and serve God, church, the kingdom as well as the world. He believes that the goal of education ought to be towards humanization, to make more fully human and not to destroy our human dignity, as against renaissance humanism emphasis on human values. Luther also was advocating for education that could be used for religious development in broader setting not just concerned about the teaching in the church, but the community at large.

Walter Brueggemann posits that church education by binding the generation into community through memory; we live into and are shaped by those events that distinctively shape the life and mission of a community.[277] The function of memory is not meant to pull us into the past but rather signals us to embrace a future, originating in events that call our communities into being, to live with hope into the future. In my opinion, through storytelling, this program will offer insight into models for our own care for others and nature partnership among communities of faith in which nobody feels a stranger in such neighborhood, capable of praising God and serving the neighborhood most effectively. I have learned that hearing the story and applying it to our lives change

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[277] Foster, *Educating Congregations*, 62.

the heart, mind, and attitude of the individual and causes a transformation in relation with God, others, community, and the world that is our home. The purpose of learning and responding to the Word of God may be enhanced by the memories of the past saints and elders of the congregation. These memories based on the stories we hear from the scriptures and the church history connect us with the past, and eventually, bind generations into one community. It reassures us of where or who we are in this program. It helps the community to live in hope into the future as it happened in the days of the saints in the Bible, who recount their faith history and our ancestors of the faith we cherish. By repeating, reciting, and memorizing these stories, one is able to receive the message that God's works can only be discovered by people through storytelling. Hence, the need to tell them well to reveal all it contains for the purpose of God's works and testimony to be experienced. It goes beyond this but also entails "responding" to the stories. One of the missions of this program is to communicate the transformative power of the Gospel to all through deeper fellowship with God in their personal lives. This mission is not possible without effective mentoring education from within to share with the masses and developing a personal connection to each other to create a communal environment. This mission is also impossible if the members are ignorant to the transformative power of the Gospel themselves. The task of education in the New Wave Care community, if properly done, will help in the building of a viable community for all, irrespective of one's faith affiliation.

Indeed, Luther was a reformer and theologian, who advocated a public system of education that will help boost living standards of the people and minimize educational bills, and argued for the primacy of scripture over this reliance on human reasoning. One

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may draw the conclusion that in terms of what we see in Luther and education today, religion is central to education and is providing a basic purpose for life.[278] In my perspective as a Presbyterian minister, the importance of the transitional living program is all a contribution of a certain kind of thrust and flavor in education that Luther helped to shape. Reminiscent of my hopeless situation 12 years ago, the Holy Spirit has been a helpful guide in my own spiritual walk when I became a homeless foreigner in New York City. The task involved in my ministry can never be accomplished apart from an even deeper strength in Christ, instructed by the Word of God and nurtured by His Spirit. These African and Ghanaian young adults who have become homeless as a result of neglect will need a new social location and a new community through my project, to tear down the walls of hostilities and oppression that seems to characterize their lives and build a new imagination about what is possible. According to the New Testament witness, the concept of incarnation and kenosis became the heart of God's plan to reconcile humanity unto Him. The incarnational ministry is therefore crucial in the transition and restoration of how millennials will do things differently with love and hope. As Gary A. Parret suggests, "When we are called to minister in a cultural context other than our own, we must seek to identify with that culture for the sake of the gospel. Such action is motivated by servant love and, as is the case whenever we strive to be servants of others, requires deep humility."[279]

Evelyn Parker offers a theology of hope that is wielded in the expectation that the cycle of evil is not just going to be confronted in the lives of individuals but overturned,

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[278] Elias, *A History of Christian Education*, 92.

[279] Elizabeth Conde-Frazier, S. Steve Kang, and Gary A. Parrett, *Many Colored Kingdom, A: Multicultural Dynamics for Spiritual Formation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2004), 135.

and evil institutional structures like racism, lack of affordable healthcare, and segregation in our educational system can be shifted.[280] When these young people don't have quality access to resources and other domains, these are spiritual issues that hope says God is not just concerned, but will contend with each of these things. Part of what Parker's research points to is that young people do not believe God is concerned about these systems and those things that take place in their lives. The young adults contend that if God is concerned, where is He and why are these things happening to them? This is more an acceptance of the status quo; however, hope says there is an expectation because God intervenes on behalf of the marginalized, the poor and the disenfranchised. Hope brings recovery to the violent youth and releases those young people who are imprisoned in various forms, so as to reshape their destiny. Parker explains that hope is wielded and rooted in the expectation that even though there is hopelessness and failure of various kinds, expectation will triumph at the end.[281] God sees the end from the beginning. He is present in the suffering of the youth and He cares for their well-being in this transitional living program. As a minister, this is what young people need to be encouraged with and bear witness to, which eventually makes sense to their reality. Young people have no other alternative, all they need to know is that God's given hope exists and empowers on a daily basis, while the church and the community avail themselves to be used by God to meet their human needs.

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[280] Parker, *Trouble Don't Last Always*, 270.

[281] Ibid., 269.

CHAPTER 6
SOCIO-ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVE

What is the socio-economic cost of resettling and equipping Ghanaian young adults for a holistic life endeavor, towards a dream legacy?

Undoubtedly, this question will aid the immigrant Ghanaian churches, the clergy, parents, and community leaders to assess the sources of finances required to help these marginalized young adults in such a transitional living program for education and transformation. Of far more interest to the future aspirations of these young adults is the implied cost of not solving this problem, resulting in social delinquency, crime, gang culture, drug abuse, sexual promiscuity, and substantial decrease in graduation rates, bringing with it the burden on the taxpayer in the community, and eventually, devaluing their American Dream for a better future.

Biblical faith is what we have today in evangelical Christianity. It is not too early to recognize that the largest growing edge of generational movement beyond our church walls is not any particular "mainline" denominationalism. What is it? "Analysts have conjured up various names for the group – Millennials, Generation Y, Post-moderns."[282] They are often ignored but the vast company of Millennials, Generation X, etc. "who do not succumb to the cultural stereotypes of a socially toxic society that defines manhood in

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[282] George Barna and Mark Hatch, *Boiling Point: It Only Takes One Degree: Monitoring Cultural Shifts in the 21st Century*, rev. ed. (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2001), 66.

terms of aggression, power, and material acquisition";[283] are "outside and beyond" what we usually call Christianity. George Barna and Mark Hatch state that "culturally speaking, a generation is a two to three-decade slice of time marked by some defining even or characteristics."[284] United States' popular culture with its unique dream prides itself of six fairly distinct living generations or groups of people; with each generation noted for its different likes, dislikes, and attributes. As they aged, they have collective experiences and therefore, have similar ideals and as a common group they have similarities. Some observers and analysts are of the opinion that a generation is one of the fundamental social categories in a society, in spite of the fact that is being overshadowed by current debate and legislative enactment of class, gender, race, and so on. The increasing prevalence of enlightenment ideas encouraged the notion that society and life were changeable, and that civilization could progress. "Emmanuel Kant summed up the central theme of the Enlightenment in the famous phrase 'Dare to know.' It was a summons to have the courage to think for oneself to test everything in the light of reason and conscience, to dare to question even the most hallowed traditions."[285] This encouraged the equation of young adults with social renewal and change. The continuous trend of changing world events is giving the signal that every generation has a different perspective of thinking and pursuing things than the previous generation. The world is changing because people change. Throughout history, we have observed that generations have undergone many changes such as fighting for the right to vote, women's rights and

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[283] James Garbarino, *Lost Boys: Why Our Sons Turn Violent and How We Can Save Them* (New York: Anchor, 2000), 238.

[284] Barna and Hatch, *Boiling Point*, 55.

[285] Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989), 39.

the fight for same-sex marriage in our current generation. "Kant's attempt to answer the

basic question 'What is reason?' led him to conclude that all human knowledge was made

up of perception of reality (*phenomena*), the way things appear to the senses, and

noumena, things in themselves as they really are, as known – if they are known at all."[286]

It's important for every person to be open minded to new ideas, innovations and goodwill

towards all men, as opposed to one's egoism. Although we may not believe what one

person values, we need to respect them in the interest of harmony and co-existence for

the betterment of humanity. The list of generations agreed upon by demographers/market

researchers on the identification and description of the population cohorts currently in

America are:

Generation Name	Births Start	Births End	Youngest Age Today*	Oldest Age Today*
The Lost Generation - The Generation of 1914	1890	1915	102	127
The Interbellum Generation	1901	1913	104	116
The Greatest Generation	1910	1924	93	107
The Silent Generation	1925	1945	72	92
Baby Boomer Generation	1946	1964	53	71
Generation X (Baby Bust)	1965	1979	38	52
Generation Y - The Millennial - Gen Next	1980	1995	22	37
Generation Z	1996	2010	7	21
Gen Alpha	2011	2025	1	6

(**if still alive today**)[287]

Generation Z, born between 1996 and 2010 are growing up in a highly diverse

American environment, the most diverse ever. While the youngest age of Generation Z in

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[286] Irvin and Sunquist, 343.

[287] Michael T. Robinson, "The Generations: Which Generation are You?" *Career Planner,* July 7, 2017, https://www.careerplanner.com/Career-Articles/Generations.cfm (accessed December 12, 2017).

2017 may be 7 years and are still too young to make an impact, the oldest at 21 years falls

into the category of the transitional living program. Higher levels of technological

advancement (e.g. social media) being experienced in the world today implies that

Generation Z kids will grow up with a highly sophisticated media and computer

environment. In academics, they are likely to pick a major in the high-tech and healthcare

fields; and will be more internet savvy, and expert than their Generation Y forerunners.

They are savvy consumers and they know what they want and how to get it. This will

continue for decades, because they have never known a world without different

computers, cell phone brands, video games, and they are over saturated with brands.[288] It

is a most inspiring fact that some young people of this generation do not apologize for

"low-tech mission" – delays in processing what they believe with action. They believe in

high-tech missions because that is essentially a purpose driven enterprise and constitute

their life dreams. Not only are these young people of our day pursuing high tech with

critical thinking, but they believe in it with a depth of conviction and manifest their belief

with practical purpose and action, within and without the walls of the church. Foreign

born and mixed-race Generation Z kids, including Ghanaians will change the American

melting pot in terms of behavior and culture for good. However, a lack of focused

attention from parents and guidance for this informative generation will capsize and

shipwreck their future lives. In recent times, it is astonishing to see hundreds of older

Generation Z Ghanaian college dropouts involved in identity theft/scam, and languishing

in American prisons with long jail sentences.

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[288] Robinson, "The Generations."

It is a phenomenon to see West African young female adults in the Bronx, who had become victim of teenage pregnancy, and "Christianity" by that name is virtually absent in their consciousness. In the corridors of the Ghanaian immigrant churches, it is the "young adult commercial musical" movement playing drums and piano at Sunday church services for a meagre fee to fend for themselves. These groups of young adults could be seen with their guitar hanging around their neck scheduling visits to three or more churches on Sundays for their weekend wage before Monday school begins. Westerners like to call these young adults skilled professional guitarist/instrumentalist, but at closer look might not fit very well at all, because they are disadvantaged as a result of family crises and feel burdened with extra load of baggage they didn't bargain for. These second-generation West African youth find themselves in Western cultural environment in which anything Western has its attractions and detractions.

West Africans in the diaspora form groups, institutions, and societies as ways in which they organize their relationships with one another – in Max Weber's words "acquired the aspects of a 'communal religion' (*Gemeinde-Religiositat*),"[289] and build cultural bridges, that "provides a basis on which the great diversity of cultures can be welcomed and cherished."[290] It seems obvious that such communal spirit creates an environment where "the majority of young West Africans, both immigrant and second-generation, are closely connected with their respective ethnic enclaves through the family and other institutions, including church, mosque, and a variety of secular associations. Such resources constitute a level of social capital that can often assist in successfully

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[289] Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993), 224.

[290] Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralistic Society*, 197.

overcoming the challenges of resettlement."[291] Ghanaians within the West African sub-region do carry their tribal affiliations with them to the diaspora, with strong emphasis on "we feeling" and freedom. Moses Biney points out that "immigrant communities appear to be closed communities, which is why scholars have called them ethnic enclaves."[292] Ethnic Ghanaians raised within a large kinship group or lineage, pride themselves with their tribal birth/identity and are honorably called "Nana" (King) by the Ghanaian community. Strong kingship groups in a tribe provide the individual with a great deal of security. Important lineage and tribal decisions in these tribes are generally made by the elders – the older men who have had a great deal of experience with life, and ensure the cohesiveness of family social relations to other communities.

Ian E. A. Yeboah writes that "socialization and identity creation among immigrants and their children are integral parts of immigrant's experiences ... Who to associate with, where, why, how, and when are major issues in the social, cultural, and economic lives of second-generation immigrant."[293] Such social processes affect church growth in Ghanaian immigrant communities. For instance, large family movement in which people come to Christ/church is often on the basis of friendship/family decisions or in which the message is shared through family ties and they must comply to join the church. Such basis for social bonding seems threatened by Ghanaians experience of dislocation as a result of acculturation.

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[291] Halter and Johnson, 222-223.

[292] Biney, *From Africa to America*, 116.

[293] Yeboah, *Black African Neo-Diaspora*, 155.

First-generation Ghanaian immigrants adopt the social norms and health behaviors of the receiving country as they become more acculturated.[294] A study from National Household Survey on Drug Abuse (NHSDA) shows that substance use among immigrants is highly influenced by their length of residency in the US, level of acculturation and degree of acculturative stress. Acculturation may be a powerful factor in alcohol and drug use among immigrants, especially the youth and young adults, due to the absence of families in the new country. As immigrants become acculturated, they start adapting to the social norms, behaviors and practices of the mainstream culture. In addition, they adopt many of the health risk behaviors that prevail in that culture, including substance abuse. Studies have also reported correlation between substance use and measures of acculturative stress (e.g. loneliness, social isolation, family separation, economic worries).[295] When immigrants experience a high level of acculturative stress, alcohol and drug use become not only a means of adaptation to the new culture but also a coping mechanism for the stress.[296] The abuse of alcohol and drug has an effect not only on the individuals using it, but also on society. Whereas some West African immigrants are able to adjust to the system easily, others struggle and fall, due to the lack of support from their community and failure to fulfill obligations at work, school, or home.

It should also be noted that the socio-economic atmosphere of the West African community portrays how modern entrepreneurial skills/ideas and familial traditions are

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[294] Jennifer A. Epstein, Gilbert J. Botvin, and Tracy Diaz, "Linguistic Acculturation and Gender Effects on Smoking among Hispanic Youth," *Preventive Medicine* 27, no.4 (1998): 583-589.

[295] Stella M. Yu et al., "Acculturation and the Health and Well-Being of US Immigrant Adolescents," *Journal of Adolescent Health* 3, no.6 (2003): 479-488.

[296] Regina Otero-Sabogal et al., "Dietary Practices, Alcohol Consumption, and Smoking Behavior: Ethnic, Sex, and Acculturation Differences," *Journal of the National Cancer Institute Monographs* 18 (Jan 1995): 73-82.

being used to enhance the community's standard of living. This is buttressed by the fact that "West Africans from Niger, Mali, Senegal, and the Gambia, show up every day, arrange their product displays, and pray to Allah for a trickle of business."[297] Contrary to the notion or how the world views the African community as passive recipients and a helpless group, the socio-economic resources of the African reflects the dimension we perceive things, think about, and make sense of our world. In this regard, Africans embrace unsurmountable storms and acculturation challenges to ensure better living standards for their families. This is evident in the corporate lives of the "merchants at the Malcom Shabazz Harlem market who dread January…. Braving plunging January temperatures, the merchants stand stiffly at their market stalls at 116th street and Lenox Avenue resisting the biting north wind and hoping that shoppers, already jaded by the Christmas holidays, will step out into the frosty air and buy a scarf, a sweater, a wool hat, or a piece of cloth."[298]

"On 13th street, the cultural crossroads of Africa America, Hausa, Songhay, Fulan, Malinke, and Wolof merchants, self-constructed as monolithic Africans, sold Africana of no distinct ethnic origin to appeal to the ideological popularity of a monolithic Afrocentric Africa. They sold 'trade-marked' goods to appeal to the more localized tastes."[299] That is how West Africans have become supremely adaptable to transform their knowledge into profits in their hardworking efforts to live the American Dream, and ensure success at societal, family, and individual level.

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[297] Stoller, *Money Has No Smell*, 1.

[298] Ibid.

[299] Ibid., 86.

Looking at this further, in regard to the role of family in economic adaptation in the diaspora, "with some exceptions, economists have viewed immigrants as independent individuals whose immigration experiences, including the initial decision to migrate, economic process in the destination country, and decisions pertaining to return migration, are based on their net gains as individuals."[300] Despite some successes of family well-being from a purely economic point of view, the process of adapting and adjusting to the new surroundings of America while maintaining the West African cultural identity have resulted in a greater exposure to and frequency of substance use. Many substance abuse problems not only stem from lack of good jobs, anxiety from marital divorce, loneliness, but from a loss of a traditional culture as they are faced with a new set of cultural norms and values in a foreign country. Many of these West African immigrants are either Christians, Muslims, other faiths, or ethnic religions who have carried their religious traditions with them into the U.S. They place a value on holding on to their African culture and at the same time wish to avoid interaction with others; while their foreign-born kids prefer to shed their cultural heritage and become absorbed in the American society. This is a characteristic of all newcomers to a foreign country; in America; it extends from the Irish and Catholic to Jews and, most recently, Muslims.

Within the Ghanaian perspectives, most often, such tension between the Ghanaian cultural norms and a new set of cultural norms in the United States have frequently become a source of conflict in the Ghanaian immigrant family. This adjustment to social norms brings with it feelings of alienation between parent and child. The stresses

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[300] Neeraj Kaushal and Cordelia Reimers, "How Economists Have Studied The Immigrant Family," in *Immigrant Families in Contemporary Society*, ed. Jennifer E. Lansford, Kirby D. Deater-Deckard, and Marc H. Bornstein, 100-113 (New York: Guilford Press, 2009), 101-102.

confronting Ghanaian immigrants are often even more intense considering the fact that they live in an environment that strongly promotes drinking, a factor that may mask the role of expectations. James B. Nelson explains that what supports such drinking is that "we live in a society where alcohol is easily available, relatively inexpensive, and glamorized by the media . . . and likely will remain so as long as there is human freedom."[301] Such a socially friendly environment seems to condition the mind of the foreigner to a formation of alcohol-related problems and lowers social self-esteem. Prominent contributing factors to the stressor are a lack of decent paying jobs, divorce, and immigration issues. Magaña and Hovey found that recent immigrants are more vulnerable to psychological stressors such as hardships, demands, frustrations, threats, or other conditions that challenge people's adaptive capacities.[302] These stressors are associated with depression, anxiety and substance use;[303] challenges that often impact physical and psychological well-being.

Fathers, especially, of these young adults spend most of their time in the African markets drinking and making fun. These Ghanaian male addicts in the Bronx, who consider the family as the main axis, have cultivated the habit of drinking hard liquor, sold mostly in African Markets and other drinking bars due to feelings of being alienated from the diverse urban life in of New York. The established African Markets not only sell African products from food to cosmetics, but also hard liquor (known as "apeteshie") imported from Ghana, deep into the night and early morning hours. Social isolation,

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[301] James B. Nelson, *Thirst: God and the Alcoholic Experience* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004), 41.

[302] Cristina G. Magaña and Joseph D. Hovey, "Psychosocial Stressors Associated with Mexican Migrant Farmworkers in the Midwest United States," *Journal of Immigrant Health* 5, no.2 (2003): 75-86.

[303] Ibid.

anxiety, and depression with its attendant poor sleep quality have led to a loss of identity/self-esteem and its attendant mental health issues; but as a pastoral caregiver it is an indicator of important needs that are going unmet.

The alarming situation in recent times is that these African Markets have been converted into liquor bars for first generation Ghanaian parents, who daily end their workday and converge at such spots to drink excessively and discuss issues arising from the political and socio-economic scene in Ghana, as well as America. Ghanaians are known for their weekend funeral festivities and that have become breeding grounds for male adults who have developed a high tolerance for substance dependency to drink and compensate for their inability to cope with variety of life stresses with its mental health issues of schizophrenia, anxiety and bipolar disorder. Furthermore, male alcoholics who suffer from all kinds of ailments are seen using traditional African herbs mixed with alcohol to ease the debilitating effects of their symptoms as a form of self-medication. The excessive use of hard liquor/alcohol is affecting their family life, their health, their productivity at work, culminating in family crises. This has resulted in health issues, involvement in crime, homelessness and increased the burden on the state. The crisis of a lack of access to medical care and psychological services is very clear. I met a 53-year-old man who came to the US in 1974 at the age of 10 years. He completed college and has worked for reputable companies in New York. After living in the US for 39 years, one would expect that he should at least be able to meet his basic needs but lacks the maturity needed to make decisions. With so many ups and downs in his life and lack of support, he has become an alcoholic, lives in shelters and experiencing deteriorating health. In Allport's view, maturity is radical discontinuity between the anxious and

healthy personality. Allport explains this criterion of maturity in six dimensions to mean that, first, the extension of self to others. This implies that mature people care about other people as much as they care about themselves, while immature people are self-absorbed and inconsiderate. In this state, one considers the welfare of others as his/her own and it feels like an individual embrace many interest.[304] The obligation God has placed on this transitional living program is to fulfill its social responsibility by helping young adults who will be in the shoes of this man, by providing spiritual guidance of educating, pastoral care and counseling, as well as referring them to detox and Alcoholic Anonymous (AA) programs. The effects of an increased use of alcohol and substances on Ghanaian family life, their health and productivity at work are distressing. This has even resulted in not only health issues, but as Emile Durkheim put it "to remain at the place where death seems imminent."[305] In this regard, alcohol consumption, as well as drug abuse and its related negative consequences have become a long-term problem, resulting in emergency room visits, violent incidents, and eventually getting these young adults in trouble with the law. Thus, Ghanaians face stress and lack the support, fomenting substance use among these second-generation Ghanaian immigrants. In situations such as this, Allport asserts that the maturity of the Ghanaian community leadership can be intimately involved with others not being possessive or controlling. In this second state, personal issues or differences should be set aside, including the negativity of the victim, and they should be loved for who they are.[306] This entails compassion, sympathy, and empathy for all, irrespective of race and gender. Undoubtedly, such new cultural and

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[304] Barbara Engler, *Personality Theories*, 8th ed. (Boston: Wadsworth, 2008), 269.

[305] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (New York: Free Press, 1995), 393.

[306] Engler, *Personality Theories*, 269.

societal pressures emerge in response to the people with whom they associate in the new culture. In a study by Feigelman, Gorman and Lee, most alcohol-related auto accidents, engaging in risky sexual behavior, involvement in violent incidents, and for getting in trouble with the law,[307] could be attributed to emotional and conduct problems in adolescence and alcoholism in adulthood. This connotes to Allport's third state of maturity which postulates that "emotional security (self-acceptance)"[308] could lead to mature people controlling their appetites. They have a sense of quantity while immature people seem at the mercy of their drives, desires, and appetites. They over-react to fear and disappointments, and they accept themselves and not wish to be somebody else.

In addition, Ghanaian parents are so pre-occupied with working two jobs to take care of the immediate family and building projects back home in Ghana, to the extent that the concept of faith formation and spiritual transformation for young people are absent, and "often are not prepared to invest the energy necessary in tending to the teens' transitions toward adulthood."[309] What compounds the situation is the fact that right from childhood, children are given to babysitters to be taken care of, as parents are busy with work and hardly spend quality time with their own children. To that effect, there is a gradual loss of parental relationship with their own children as they grow into adulthood and feel they are left alone to figure out life on their own without any faith development.

Amazingly, the common phenomena of young adults being invited by their Ghanaian parents to shoulder part of the economic burden of the household is having a

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[307] William Feigelman, Bernard S. Gorman, and Julia A. Lee, "Binge Drinkers, Illicit Drug Users, and Polydrug Users: An Epidemiological Study of American Collegians," *Journal of Alcohol and Drug Education* 44, no.1 (1998): 47.

[308] Engler, *Personality Theories*, 269.

[309] Rowatt, *Adolescents in Crisis*, 73.

detrimental effect on their college education, because doing part-time job as a full-time college student is burdensome. Worse of all, parents pass on the prospect of meager incomes and family instability to their children, by coercing their teens to take up part-time jobs to help pay household bills, ensuring a continuing expanding cycle of economic distress. As a result, the economic and social future of Ghanaian young adults in poor and middle-class neighborhoods is being undermined by American culture that promotes teenage sex, divorce, cohabitation, and out-of-wedlock birth. For the Ghanaian mother or father with children who becomes a victim to such neighborhood vices, divorce increases the financial responsibility and typically her/his hours of labor outside the home is affected. For Adwoa Eva (not real name) a 46-year-old divorced mother, and member of Trinity Presbyterian church; additional work hours disrupted her network of support for parenting her three kids. As Allport explained, such mature adult mothers with "realistic perception, skills, and assignments…live in the real world." They are problem solvers and have developed the appropriate skills to complete their assigned tasks and work. Moreover, their work is not a burden to them; it is a responsibility whose challenge can be accepted without self-pity."[310] In spite of this, as a single mother, these additional stresses take their toll and consequently, experienced increased levels of physical and mental illness, addictions, and even suicide following divorce – all these outcomes having effect on the family income to take care of three kids. Adwoa Eva's problem was further aggravated by the lack of Ghanaian cultural acceptance of what the church/community used to describe as "illicit" relationships, when Eva's undocumented unemployed boyfriend moved into her house, under the pretext of helping to care for her

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[310] Engler, *Personality Theories*, 269.

three kids. Welfare payments to Eva's boyfriend reduced his participation in the workforce; erode the belief in effort and his own abilities, eventually transmitted distortion to Eva's families. This hampered economic prosperity of their home, by bringing high level of disruption and weakness in the household income, as well as economic and social fiber of the three kids and their high score grades began to flop.

The worst of it all, Ghanaian parents have adopted the habit of sending their 3 to 9-month year old babies to Ghana to be taken care of by their grandmothers, aunts, or sisters, in order to attend to busy necessities of life. In this process of homeland caring or nurturing by the extended family in Ghana, special love of relationship (synchronism) develops between the foreign-born child and the homeland carer. This is likely to break the bond or attachment between the biological mother/father and their child in Ghana. Such decision weakens "self-objectification" that Allport explains is difficult to acquire because "mature people know what they can do, what they cannot do, and what they ought to do . . . The sense of humor to which Allport referred entails recognizing the ludicrous behaviors we share with others because of our common humanity."[311] Eventually, biological parents cut off the parent-child bond, even though they have been communicating and sending money for their kids' upkeep in Ghana. And after 14 to 20 years of upbringing in their parents' homeland of Ghana, their arrival as young adults at the age of 17 to 22 years in the United States means a new wave of struggle for the biological parents.

Nina and Joel (not the real name) had been sent to Ghana by their biological parents at the age of 5 months and cared for by their aunty, with the biological parents

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[311] Ibid., 269-270.

providing all the necessary financial resources for their upkeep. Twenty-one years later, Nina and Joel arrived in the United States with a reaction to their biological parents that "you neglected us, even though we know that you have been sending all the needed resources for our upkeep." Nina and Joel will refer to their biological mother as "sister," while that of their aunt in Ghana as "mother;" and they will be sending financial support to the aunt in Ghana. Meanwhile, the biological parents expect Nina and Joel to contribute to the payment of the family household bills in America. This drew protest from the biological parents and sought pastoral counseling. Eventually, there wasn't any "unifying philosophy of life" which entails a clear understanding of life's goals and purposes that Nina and Joel's parents embraced.[312] Maturity is something to live for beyond oneself and a key to possessing maturity according to Allport.

During my pastoral counseling with them, it became clear that the biological parents in America sent Nina and Joel (at age 5 months) to Ghana, not only to be exposed to cultural norms of native Ghana, but the parents will avail themselves of the needed time to work and study. Their kids sojourn in Ghana, according to their parents is to help them connect with the Ghanaian worldview and that of the western culture. As their pastor, I made both the parents and their children aware that it will take time for both parents and children to work together towards a closer cooperation, as the children also will have to understand the rationale or the motive behind the parents sending them to Ghana at that age. Moses as a child spent many years of his childhood and adult life in the court of Pharaoh and Jethro's hometown of Midian, yet he could identify with his people, the Israelites. Through God's commission and mandate Moses came back from

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[312] Ibid., 270.

exile and became God's instrument of liberation to bring His people, Israelites out of bondage.

It seems clear that the additional stress of immigration, vis-à-vis separation of families left behind in Africa as a result of not getting their green card is demoralizing. Due to that, some so-called Christian lawyers capitalized on their immigration issues to enrich themselves at the expense of the undocumented Ghanaian immigrants. What is perplexing is the forced deportation of Africans and Latin American immigrants while no such effort to deport European immigrants has been initiated under Trump's administration. This clearly affords privilege to the white immigrants. Moreover, the reinstating of long prison sentences by the Justice Department clearly shows a perpetuation of mass incarceration strategies, denying justice to non-whites and affording privilege to whites. Unfortunately, some white folks in the community would want to inflict pain upon these undocumented West African immigrants for no apparent reason other than the color of their skin. "Race and Racism: Illumination Project Curriculum Materials" by Rowan Wolf and Caroline Le Guin explains race as a socially constructed artifact that categorizes people based on visual differences, which are imputed to indicate invisible differences.[313] This article states that the categorizations are amorphous and fluid over time, which reflects their social rather than physical basis. This means that the categorization of people leads to racism. Further, the article describes racism as any policy, belief, attitude, action, or inaction which subordinates, individuals or groups

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[313] Rowan Wolf and Caroline Le Guin, "Race and Racism," Illumination Project Curriculum Materials, Portland Community College, https://www.pcc.edu/resources/illumination/documents/race-and-racism-curriculum.pdf (accessed December 12, 2017).

based on their race.[314] Jim Wallis understands the propensity of human beings to carry racial prejudice; he refers to this state as sin. From the perspective of the oppressor, Jim Wallis writes, "prejudice may indeed be a universal human sin that all races exhibit, but racism is more than an inevitable consequence of human nature or societal accident. Rather racism is a system of oppression for social and economic purposes. As many analysts have suggested, racism is prejudice plus power."[315] Therefore, given racism's manifestation as systemic oppression, the collective unconscious of white Americans have benefited directly from societal racial structures.

Given this human tendency, young adults have a clear sense that they have suffered more than other age groups, as a result of racial and economic inequalities in America. Even the best young adults in the church have been the most vulnerable young adults who are "struggling with significant questions of cultural identity…the tensions, contradictions, fears, doubts, hopes and 'deferred' dreams that are part and parcel of living a borrowed and colonized cultural existence,"[316] from the yoke of racism passed down to them in modern American society.

If the racial inequalities in America are to be adequately addressed, it is the self-liberating power of the introverted mind that must be cultivated in America's spiritual communities. In Presbyterian Church of United States of America (PCUSA) tradition, there are cultural segments of – Black American Churches, Hispanic churches, Korean churches, African Immigrant churches, Arab churches, Thai churches, and above all, the dominant White American Presbyterian churches. The Book of Order states that there is

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[314] Ibid.

[315] Wallis, *America's Original Sin*, 45.

[316] Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 11.

"the triune God—Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit—creates, redeems, sustains, rules, and transforms all things and all people,"[317] that speaks to the creation of a new archetype in regard to race and racism. Each race brings diversity and beauty to the Presbyterian religious community, the beginning of a new chapter in the story of our collective lives, found in the wisdom of God. Contemplating the appearance of one's ancestral origin suggest an identity completely unknown, yet always present. Yet, this identity is entirely void of racial, gender, or archetypal notions; it is an existence without illusion. Jim Wallis suggests that to begin with, Americans must die to the illusion of being white; "the existence and persistence of white identity itself, with the accompanying assumption of white privilege, is still a major obstacle to real change in the racial climate. Borrowing a phrase from James Cone, what would it mean for us to 'die to whiteness'?"[318]

Chap Clark argues that in every society, there are the privileged and the vulnerable. The vulnerable are the youths from poor homes due to their race or class. The intense violence these vulnerable youths experience while growing up creates an environment that chokes, and more importantly shapes their identity. Further, they endure not only the realities of violence but drug use which eventually leads to a systemic, economic and racial oppression.[319] While the reversal of systemic racism is vital to composing a new racial story, the wisdom in Jim Wallis' argument comes from the language of reversing the power of the oppressor as a primarily spiritual task. White

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[317] Presbyterian Church, *Book of Order Part II, 2013-2015* (Louisville, KY: The Office of the General Assembly, 2013), http://bookoforder.info/book-of-order-2013-15.pdf, 1.

[318] Wallis, *America's Original Sin*, 73.

[319] Clark, *Hurt 2.0*, 171.

and male privilege continues to perpetuate through systematic, institutionalized policy, and practice. A strategic counter response comes through education as resistance.

Wallis writes, "White privilege becomes the ideology and the idol that must be debunked, cast away, and repented of if we are to move into the new world of respecting the image of God in all God's children."[320] He argues the church and spiritual community are the places to teach white people how to decline and renounce the benefits of being white. It means no longer participating in decisions and systems that continue the illusion of being white or perpetuate white privilege. Wallis calls upon the morally and socially conscious whites to redefine themselves as the children of God, who as part of their collective, interior practice, reject racial privilege and stand alongside the historically oppressed as equals. Wallis writes "the way things are must no longer be accepted — especially by the dominant racial group that most benefits from that unfairness. Things must change, and a new generation must take up that task."[321] White America must understand its privilege as sin and then repent; by turning from old ways, changing policies and practices, thereby creating new communities that point to another way living out a whole new story.

Martin Luther King, Jr. understood the power of racial injustice and its rootedness in the illusion of race. Dr. King could also see the power of fear at play in the collective unconscious of oppression and believed the antidote to be found in the practice of love. The ability of the oppressed to love the oppressor has, for King, the power to dismantle the systems of racial inequality. In his sermon, "Antidotes to Fear," Dr. King speaks of

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[320] Wallis, *America's Original Sin*, 95.

[321] Ibid., 96

the vision of a new racial paradigm that is dictated by mutual love, dissolving the boundary of the oppressor and the oppressed.

Dr. King suggests that "racial segregation is buttressed by such irrational fears as loss of preferred economic privilege, altered social status, intermarriage, and adjustment to new situations."[322] These irrational fears white people experience, in King's mind, create a host of negative reactions, including the subjugation of and infliction of violence against black Americans. However, these actions do not remove fear but only instill a deeper fear creating further psychosis and paranoia.[323] The solution to this fear, according to Dr. King, is love on both sides.

The hope of the church is the transitional living program and the entire Ghanaian community will make provision of love that would nurture the young adults. For instance, American religion is one of the few that is not strictly age stratified, and highlights personal interactions over time. Among American young adults, those who attain 18 years feel that they are free and should be on their own. This group is comparatively less religious and the reason being that some leave their parents' home at this time of age. Many researchers believe that in this period, depending upon where they socialize, they will choose to stay away from religion. Generally, the importance and practice among these age groups are declining, as observers have led us to believe. Not all young adults have the same mindset, characteristics, attitude to religion. Either most young adults don't like religion or they are disconnected. However, most young adults see life as a long process of inheriting and dissemination norms of how people get to

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[322] King, *Strength to Love*, 125.

[323] Ibid.

know what is right and wrong, with its attendant values. Life is not an event; is a process. As they grow, they are always socializing. Of utmost importance, many of the things that they have come to believe normally have come through the church interactions, and inform their own decisions. Socialization helps them to embrace some of the things in the society, particularly, religious socialization, the contents of which take them through new realities. Moreover, in the church, one might have youth culture and other forms of culture, yet religion itself will maintain and retain that culture from the old generation, which in turn affects the young adults' way of doing things.

It is no secret within the Ghanaian immigrant church/community that there is difficulty in the process of adaptation to new conditions of life into the new society, racism, inadequate support from the community and lack of counseling have contributed to the marginalization of young adults in the diaspora. Additionally, stressors such as difficulties in creating a social network and lack of economic resources can lead to feelings of loneliness, isolation, depression, domestic violence, divorce, poverty, and even discrimination in their new country. The same holds true to poor and low-income Ghanaian parents in high-poverty minority Bronx neighborhoods. They suffer unique socio-economic stress, culminating in negative fates of these young adults. Ellen and Turner write that "these characteristics of high-poverty neighborhoods may have deleterious consequences for the cognitive functioning socialization, physical health, emotional functioning, and academic achievement of children and adolescents."[324] Observed by one social worker in my church, most often adolescents who grow up in Ghanaian families under economic stress, and with a single parent are poorly supervised,

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[324] Ellen and Turner, "Does Neighborhood Matter?"833-866.

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and often, gain autonomy too early. This is in response to some adolescents in my church community who have become unsupervised adolescents, addicted to drugs/alcohol, depressed, and engaging in risky behaviors of early sexual activity, adolescent pregnancy resulting in lower educational attainment.

Young adults of today live with privatized struggles, but with America's struggling economy they face some distinctive ones like payment of huge student loans with high interest rates and unemployment. The assault on the imagination by way of the visual on social media has brought with it new horizons, but disappointing fantasies as well. Art and skills have diminishing returns without an institution or worldview to interpret them, and be creative through wealth of knowledge for transformation. After some time, lack of critical thinking wane intellectual pursuit into merely entertaining experiences and the mind seeks more but futilely. This is the built-in price of pleasure that has crippled the life dreams of many young adults on uncertain terrain.

Chaotic learning environments, "combined with limited parental involvement in adolescents' education, have triggered serious consequences. Not surprisingly, low-income adolescents have reduced achievement motivation and much higher risk of educational failure,"[325] resulting in high college dropout rates. Hardly ever do Ghanaian parents visit their kids at college/university campuses, let alone participate in parent-teacher association (PTA) meetings. Yet, some parents are so preoccupied with higher educational pursuits, and therefore pressure their adolescent kids to pursue career courses not of their choice. The most fundamental element in Ghanaian culture is parental supervision. When there is neglect or limited parental involvement, kids become victims

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[325] Schultz, "Socioeconomic Advantage and Achievement Motivation," 221-232.

to social vices such as drug use and abortive educational pursuit. There are many reasons

why the youth become school dropouts and drug addicts. Drug dependence has no one

single cause and is not directly passed from one generation to another genetically. It is the

result of a complex group of genetic, psychological, and environmental factors.[326]

Alcohol and drug use among the youth contributes to thousands of deaths each year.

Most youth believe that drug use is for socialization. It often boosts their confidence and

helps reduce the stress they experience in social settings. The greatest source begins in

the house through abandonment, apart from the larger scale religious pluralism, identity,

faith and finding belonging in social media, have been major challenges that the youth

are facing. This, in my opinion is a militating factor in young adults' violence.

Young adults' violence has been an issue in the national discourse for a long time.

According to Darius Prier "many of these youths flirted with gang activity, came from

homes where their family members are going through drug addiction, or participated in

the underground drug market economy, or have had a family member gunned down

through street violence."[327] In an age where harsh words can be memorized on a "twitter

page" or "Facebook wall," young people are going to extreme measures for validation

and searching for acceptance within peer groups. This is horrific in a gang culture

environment. According to Chap Clark, "children who grow up in homes or communities

that normalize violence have a greater chance of seeing themselves as violent, and

thereby not only will be prone to perpetuate a lifestyle of violence, but also will view

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[326] Roxanne Dryden-Edwards, "Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse (Alcohol Use Disorder)," www.medicinenet.com/alcohol_abuse_and_alcoholism/article.htm#facts (accessed December 12, 2017).

[327] Darius Prier, "Hip-Hop as a Counter-Public Space of Resistance for Black Male Youth," in *Youth Culture, Education and Resistance: Subverting the Commercial Ordering of Life*, ed. Brad J. Porfilio and Paul R. Carr (Rotterdam: Sense Publishers), 124.

themselves as violent persons, a defining label."[328] Erickson's developmental theory postulates that children could be shaped by the environment. According to Erickson, the ego develops as it successfully resolves crisis (problem solver) that are particularly developed as a result of genetic, culture, and historical content.[329]

The ego develops through a life span which is from infancy to old age – it begins at birth and continues until we are no longer in this world. "Trust versus mistrust" is the key consideration of the first stage of Erickson theory. Throughout the individual developmental stages, from infancy to the elderly state, he/she goes through trust versus mistrust leading his/her faith into something. We are witnesses to how most babies or children cry a lot when they are not with their parents or people they know. A likely proof that they don't have trust leading to not having faith in the people they don't know or don't feel comfortable with. Throughout life, this can be shown in humans, making them have faith or trust in people/things or not having faith when there is mistrust. This supports Erickson's stage of psychosocial development of age 0-2 years as the "Trust and Mistrust" stage, in which a child learns the virtues of hope with his/her significant relations with the mother, whether he/she can trust the world. According to Helen Bee and Denis Boyd, Erickson hypothesizes that the major developmental task in infancy is to learn whether or not other people, especially parents, regularly satisfy basic needs.[330] For instance, if parents are neglectful, or even abusive, the infant instead learns mistrust and sees the world as an unreliable, unpredictable, and probably a dangerous place to live.[331]

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[328] Clark, *Hurt 2.0*, 170.

[329] Engler, *Personality Theories*, 160.

[330] Helen Bee and Denise Boyd, *The Developing Child*, 12th ed. (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2010).

[331] Ibid.

For this reason, the negative impact of having some experience with mistrust allows the infant to gain an understanding of what constitutes dangerous situations later in his/her life.[332] But let it be said that the amount of trust derived from earliest infantile experience does not seem to depend on absolute quantities of food or demonstrations of love, but rather on the quality of the maternal relationship.

Similarly, significant relations and the environment could determine one's accomplishments and failures. An environment with violence like the South Bronx can have a great impact on a child, therefore pruning them into being violent, and consequently taking refuge in a gang culture. This is because as vulnerable as they are, finding their sense of self, render them at a higher risk of doing so in order to find security and stability at a population with violence. They get involved to improve their lives with the statement that "nobody helped me when I was growing up," which is common in our society today. To make it worse, they are even told how they are less than nothing and can never be anything, a strong statement which goes deep into a "spiritual metamorphosis" of coming true by affecting the kid.

Problems in the Bronx community are very alarming considering the nature of violence that takes place on the streets and in the schools. Street gang fights, drug peddling, youth prostitution, lack of jobs, poverty, etc. makes life worse in the Bronx than in any borough of New York City. Effectively addressing such pressing needs of marginalized youth of this community calls for an atmosphere of positive brain-storming and critical thinking from the various leaderships of the immigrant churches within the vicinity and the youth leadership. Developing such initiatives should not be empty

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[332] Ibid.

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rhetoric. My transitional living program will suggest that those mega-churches in the community should be in the forefront together mobilizing resources, developing effective strategies in a determined effort to achieve the maximum good, for these victims of drug abuse.

At times we underestimate the significance of the presence of parents in the lives of young people, especially in an urban context where we know that everybody grows up without a father, etc. Though we may see one young person who appears to be successful without the father, under the umbrella of family, there is no greater source of pain than the absence of a father. What makes the absence of a father as well as a mother so grueling for a young person is the message that it conveys which eventually results in flight violence. It is therefore important for this project to process the impact and translate in the destiny of the young adults because who we come from profoundly shapes our personhood.

My twenty-three-year experience as a youth minister and currently a pastor in a mainline denominational church has shown me that one of the most important needs of young adults is that they would have the opportunity to be closer and spend more time with their parents, especially where parents are always present.

> Prior research has found that emotional closeness and frequent contact are associated with higher levels of exchange. Likewise … there is more exchange among family members who are geographically close. When offspring and parents are more involved in one another's lives, offspring are probably more likely to turn to parents when they need help. Likewise, parents are probably more aware of their offspring's needs and feel more moved to help. Age of adult offspring has been shown to be negatively associated with geographical and emotional closeness with parents.[333]

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[333] Hartnett et al, "Parental Support during Young Adulthood," 975-1007.

There is a deep affectionate yearning and longing in the souls of young men that is not easily gratified. On the other hand, there is the manifestation in young women's longing for intimacy, wanting to be noticed and protected by the opposite sex, even to their own detriment, while in young males it plays out in so many behavioral patterns. James Garbarino explains a kind of depression that manifests in such different ways. He argues,

> Of course, it is true that the majority of boys incarcerated for violent crimes were subject to abuse or neglect as children . . . Only 35 percent of abused kids with negative and aggressive social maps become violent . . . Why do some boys who are abused develop some or all of the self-defeating behaviors and activities that characterize bad boys while others do not? Some children probably respond by developing other kinds of problems, perhaps confining their response to the internalizing problems of depression, low self-esteem, self-destructive behavior, and bodily troubles like headaches and stomachaches.[334]

In a sense, depression manifests itself in many faces and works with young men in particular. In such circumstances, young people just don't know what to do with it because the culture doesn't provide an occasion to express the yearning or the loss about the father not being there, thus, depression expressing through rage.

People normally assume that depression is a mere feeling of sadness; however, it is much more than that. It is a psychotic illness that interferes with daily life, though there are times a person may feel sad, lonely or hopeless for a few days it is not regarded as depression. According to the National Institute of Mental health, it is a combination of symptoms including lack of sleep, starvation, or other means of acts that draw attention to them. It causes the victim to lose interest in activities that they once had interest in and imposes pain on them. Depression on the other hand can also have a social effect.

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[334] Garbarino, *Lost Boys*, 82-83.

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Depression can change how a person functions socially in society and in relationship with others. Social effects of depression include low productivity or performance at school or workplace. When one is depressed his or her performance in school or at work is affected. This is so because the depressed person doesn't have the push to go to work or school and even if he or she does, he or she doesn't have the energy to perform. Another social effect is withdrawing from society and family. Depression can make one not participate in social or family activities because depressed people suffer from anhedonia in associating with society or family and even if they attend social or family functions they are seen isolated and quiet or talking to themselves. Depression can also lead to alcohol and substance abuse. This is so because most depressed people tend to alcohol and substance abuse to fend for the problems. They often think that using alcohol and substance abuse will make them forget what they are going through, but it rather makes them addicted to it which can also lead to their untimely death.

Garbarino also talks about workaholic youths who are always busy doing something to keep themselves occupied, meanwhile the pain persists.[335] For instance, my team of young men I work with at Trinity Presbyterian Church, though seem united they have their crises and vices. If a father and a mother do not teach and guide these youths concerning life principles, it not only creates a gap or loss, but finds expression through sexual activity, substance abuse, violence, and aggression. Though some will channel their energy in a more constructive way, yet still the need for longing and space for the parents cannot be over emphasized. It is not surprising that there is a high rate incarceration among men in the American society. This means that the entire generation,

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[335] Garbarino, *Lost Boys*, 77.

community and cohort of young people are growing up with a deep sense of hurt and insignificance, and this has led to gang activity where they make their voices known through the pistol, assault, and graffiti. They are filling their own gap; however, such a price is costly in terms of loss of lives. As ministers, church, and community leaders, the socio-economic cost of not presenting a common front to solving this menace will be catastrophic with alarming future consequences; we need to help young people to be in tune with the experience of God in ways they can feel God and tap into the divine in a way that is real and tangible for them. G. Wade Rowatt, Jr. even posits that in counseling, potential assailants, "have the youth rate both their inner pain and their rage at specific persons or groups. Assist them to see others as persons of worth."[336] Where did this rage come from? Most of them, as babies were given violent video games and they have grown up to kill members of opposing gangs and the ordinary man in the street. Worse of all, the media (violent movies) helped construct violence and masculinity as a cultural norm, depicting these young adults as tough guys. This menace is more than young adults growing up in abusive homes to become perpetrators; these aggressions and rage come from deep down in the soul within the family structure that stopped caring for them, and was re-enforced by the societal structures that carry out their own violent assault against young people and the marginalized. For Joe Douglas, rage was part of his family structure and this gradually landed him in the gang lifestyle and was expressed through drug abuse.

Dany Hayes (not the real name), a Trinity Presbyterian Church member was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment in a gang and identity scam-related charges seven

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[336] Rowatt, *Adolescents in Crisis*, 144.

years ago. During the court proceedings, the presiding judge didn't allow me to talk when Hayes' lawyer raised the court privilege for me as his pastor to the sentencing judge to temper justice with mercy during his sentencing. The judge raised an objection and advised me to rather use the crime of Hayes to counsel young kids to desist from such social vices and be law abiding citizens. An eye opener indeed! Some of these young adults acquire belief of learned helplessness in the early years culminating in dropping out of school or getting pregnant before marriage, thus, jeopardizing their socio-economic future.

While reflecting on the saga of the young adults, my mind took flight from church youths and realized that the young men who do not set foot in the church are the ones I have to engage in dialogue and discourse on the street corners of my community. They have their own church in the wild echoing the Hip Hop culture. "Hip Hop is an urban subculture that seeks to express a lifestyle, attitude or theology. Rejecting the dominant culture, it seeks to increase social consciousness, cultural awareness and racial pride. Rap music functions as the vehicle by which the cultural messages of Hip Hop are sent, and the industry by which Hip Hop culture is funded and propagated."[337] This informs me that youth ministry is not limited to the church. Though part of my ministry is discipleship and evangelism, it also includes reaching the lost (lost boys), through the transitional living program. This takes a level of understanding and intensity, which calls for working with that one lost boy. The Holy Spirit transforms that one lost boy who then searches and finds an entire community. This calls for discernment because God will lead me to my specific assignment as I become sensitive to His direction. Moreover, I have to trust

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[337] Daniel White Hodge, *The Soul of Hip Hop: Rims, Timbs and a Cultural Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2010), 38.

God for the energy, time and resources to teach and impact faith to these young adults in this culture of violence and emotional disturbances, for better life satisfaction.

If these young adults are not transformed through future career pursuits, unemployment — due to a lack of continuing education — will increase the risk to marriage. The possibility to marry or cohabit at earlier ages, or marry as a pregnant teenager, could trigger higher level of poverty, because education provides job security. If the restoration of young adults among disadvantaged Ghanaian parents fail to become one of the most important goals of faith and secular Ghanaian communities that are concerned about the plight and future of these marginalized young adults, the effects of their marginalization on parents' prosperity and well-being will be like the action of termites on the beams in a home's foundation: they are weakening, quietly but seriously, the structural underpinnings of society. The longer this transitional living program reform is delayed, the more these young adults' future will be doomed to living in poverty with its life-changing effects. Community leaders, church agents, traditional leaders can and must take clear steps to restore the young adults' dreams and aspirations – the backbone of the Ghanaian family and society in America. The Ghanaian community, the churches, and traditional leaders can play important roles in rebuilding the young adults to ensure that Ghanaian young adults escape the poverty trap and reach their full potential, by offering their unflinching support for this program.

In the wake of hopelessness, is emancipatory hope, the "expectation that the forms of hegemonic relations – race, class, and gender dominance – will be toppled, and to have emancipatory hope is to acknowledge one's personal agency in God's vision for human equality. This is the theological framework that guides my constructive response

to issues of skepticism, cynicism, and despair that are themes in the life stories of twenty African American teenagers. Hopelessness enshrouds the spirituality of these teens."[338] It is therefore my responsibility to teach hope as the expectation and confidence assurance that this act of dislocation can be shifted. Evelyn Parker makes the distinction between hope and wishful thinking. Wishful thinking is weary; maybe let me do the power of positive thinking. The Bible says that they that hope in the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like the eagles. This means that hope is an expectation and those who hope in the Lord shall not be disappointed. The writer of the book of Hebrews makes us to believe that hope is a prerequisite to faith. *"Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see"* (Hebrews 11:1, NIV). Thus, without hope there can be no faith. Cultivating hope in the heart of young person is necessary in the process of their faith formation. Emancipatory hope prepares . . . . . adolescents for leadership so that they practice critical consciousness and a critical agency in the midst of the hegemonic evils of racism, classism, and sexism. As leaders, African American adolescents serve humanity and live out their calling as Christians. Youth leadership includes pastoral care, mission, church administration, worship leading, and creating music."[339] If faith is the substance of things hoped for then I need to have something that I am hoping for. For instance, there are a lot of young people in the diaspora who don't feel hopeful, particularly in their academic and vocational future. There is so much pressure that they have resigned not to try rather than fail because they can't measure up to all those standards that are being demanded in the academic world.

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[338] Parker, *Trouble Don't Last Always*, 11.

[339] Ibid., 153.

Some even don't apply for scholarships and other related benefits because there is the expectation that they don't measure up or qualify. Earlier last year, I had an exclusive counseling session with Joe Douglas (not real name), a new member in my church who use to be a gang member, about the need to further his education. In our discussions, he echoed by saying that "I don't even want to hope for anything because to hope sometimes is too painful. . . Why will I get my hopes up when every system around me, from parents' abandonment to school, and even church, right to individuals that I put my trust in have disappointed me? Why in the wake of such abandonment will I seek to hope in anything?" I was surprised by Joe's statement and realized that there was a sense of urgency to invest in the life of such young people. The writer of Proverbs says that hope deferred makes the heart sink. When you are looking out of the window for a daddy to show up every single week and he never does, after a while your heart will sink. In Joe's case, what I realized is that the family, friends, and school have failed him, and the church which he was escaping to has herself crumbled, and that diminished his hope. Like Joe, we have a lot of young people who don't have that level of hope in the institution of the church, and part of the mission of the transitional living program is to help reclaim such young people swimming in the pool of hopelessness and oppression. This program will rally, not just the efforts of the community/church leadership and the youth leaders, but more importantly, address the causes of injustice that have eluded the young adults. While informing the church and community, the sense of urgency in addressing prevailing social needs such as drug abuse, violence, neglect, abandonment, etc. of young adults and working with social institutions to alleviate the problem.

It will help us pray, study, plan, and experiment if we know the past history of mission strategy. These neglected groups (young adults) will only be reached with a concerted effort that the church and community will forge with a common goal and vision. Titanic transformation needs to take place among Ghanaian young adults through the implementation of this program. Much of their potential is being squandered due to parental neglect. Future building is barely keeping pace with neglect and marginalization. In borough-after-borough, like a bomb with a delayed-action fuse, the marginalized have led to gruesome gang culture and destabilized life dreams. The young adults face tremendous problems in socio-economic development. Ghanaian institutions, agencies and churches could be heavily involved in fostering this transformation through New Wave Care strategies, new approaches to caring, and new theologies could be developed in a serious attempt to incorporate the Ghanaian way of motivation in less Western garb. Our young adults may be the next historical future legacy but there will be hardly anything drab or staid about it.

As a pastor and facilitator, this project can help these marginalized young adults make sense of it all by helping them to connect their fragmented lives and to see the evidence of God's providence involving both their heart and the mind, seeking to find other ways of meeting needs. This is precisely what may have brought about a highly charged desire in contemporary Ghanaian immigrant communities/churches expression with their hope having been awakened in the process of this project, because leaders have a responsibility to remove obstacles in the path of young adults, so that sensitivity to the experience of the elders and reasoning of the young adults become key in their transformational development. Communal spirit is a vital part of our being and should be

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engaged, but tribalistic churches perversion such unity, because the spirit remains

nourished in the harried expression of this ongoing project.

CHAPTER 7
MINISTERIAL COMPETENCIES (MY GROWTH)

In the journey throughout this Doctor of Ministry research project, I have experienced personal growth and acquired insightful knowledge unknown and unreachable to me. By God's grace, what I began with, not knowing what I needed to change in my community, God has guided and provided me the necessary tools/skills and resources to accomplish His vision, purpose, and plan for my life.

Below are the competencies that I chose and I have developed to impact to the next generation for a better fruitful future.

Community Organizer

I build supportive partnership/coalition with members and leaders of the community, educational department, and state leaders, together with people of faith to participate and contribute their unique gifts, talents, and resources strategically to the broader movement of justice in the community, providing shelter for the homeless, visiting the sick, caring for the poor, as well as bringing awareness to the marginalized young adults in the community. More importantly, attending conferences, seminars, programs, retreats, while Prayer Watch Temple Ministries International Inc., Bronx, New York, a faith-rooted community organization assisted in training and to accomplish this competency. Undoubtedly, I gained insightful knowledge into what it is to be a community organizer, to better help and involve the immigrant church, the community,

faith-based organizations, and academic institutions in mentoring and helping young adults.

Furthermore, seminars, conferences, workshops I attended, gave me the understanding to be sensitive to and empathize with victims of social injustice by interceding for victims who as a community organizer see coming in the ministry and church, like young adults engaged in risky behaviors as well as the oppressed seeking justice and liberty. This is assisting me to better develop and initiate a comprehensive, viable transitional project in concert with the parents, Ghanaian community, and grassroots organizations, to rehabilitate and transform marginalized young adults. Inspirationally, I attended meetings to intercede for the needy, the persecuted, families about to be deported in New York City, the church, nations, etc. at Prayer Watch Temple Ministries international and Trinity Presbyterian Church, weekly.

As a result of my first-hand experiences of injustice, due to discrimination and racist attitudes that were directed toward me in my previous seminary education because of my African decent, it gave me the impetus to encourage young adults in my community to stand up against fear/intimidation and not feel ashamed of who they are, knowing that they are loved by God, their family, and the church. During the summer, I joined hands with the Trinity Presbyterian congregation, in witnessing beyond the walls of the church to people groups of different community, especially, Hispanics, Thais, and other ethnic groups, with the aim of seeking to ensure the future transformation of the faith community through social justice. This process of sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ has not only brought joy, satisfaction, and fulfillment, but integrity to the divine message and the messenger.

Leader

As a leader, I have learned more from those I lead, as well as those who lead me and others. The humility displayed by those leading me and those I lead have humbled me, as it has given me the opportunity to get closer to people who are difficult to approach and interact with. In enrolling in seminars, conferences, and programs, I learned how to be in-tune with the world of the young adults; their present well-being and experiences they go through. In my quest to be a transformative leader, my veteran Spirit-filled leaders impacted in me with nuggets of leadership skills, which include motivation, determination, integrity, self-confidence, sociability, intelligence, and problem-solving, to create a team work that inspires creative vision for at risk young adults who are being led to see bright future, and help them to develop it.

I have also discovered ministerial inquiry of inspiring and empowering young adults in every stage I lead, in my ability to share knowledge and resources to equip them. I have learned in creating a leadership environment of respecting talents, abilities, and gifts that they exhibit, provide needed support, follow-up on their initiatives, and give them constructive criticism effectively. Currently, the seminars, programs, and conferences have enabled me to achieve this level of competency effectively, more able to empower others to realize their own calling and gifts. Insightfully, I have the willingness, not only to listen and respond appropriately to concerns/problems of others, but more than ever before sympathetic and compassionate in relating to them so as to bring transformation in the community.

Religious Educator

As a religious educator, I developed more active systematic biblical study and learned effective theological training in the Master of Art in Religious Education at New

York Theological Seminary, to teach in the church, community, and youth camps/conferences. The MARE program helped me to discover and explore theories of teaching and how people learn in helping to shape the future of their religious education in the church, spilling over into the community. Further, attending training programs like annual retreats, workshops, prayer and fasting sessions at Prayer Watch Temple Ministries and educational conferences, gave me in-depth understanding of an effective religious educator. Through these seminars and workshops, I developed more creativity and courage to prompt others in asking new questions that provokes human thinking and works toward healing, reconciliation, and justice.

My on-going religious program at New York Theological Seminary is helping me to discover new resources to enlighten my hearers to be more spiritually conscious about themselves, others, and the society at large. Furthermore, I have developed and improved in my ability to skillfully interpret the Bible in a meaningful way, and increased my efforts in empowering the congregation to grow spiritually. As a result, I have been able to forge meaning in relation to theology, counseling, and mentorship, which find expression through incarnational teaching as passion for caring for young adults grows, paving the way for openness to dialogue with others.

My Journey

My Site Team members, Mrs. Henrietta Nana Adwoa Mensah, Dr. Richard Brew, Rev. Dr. Dinah Mensah, Mr. Felix Ofori, Miss. Alice Acheaa, and Mr. Christian Ofosu-Nyantakyi, my family, Prayer Watch Temple Ministries International, and the discussion group for this project have been such inspiring, motivational, encouraging, and above all, educational to me throughout my journey in writing this dissertation project. The

tremendous support I received from each group has brought not only a personal growth but also enlightened me to faith-rooted organizer, a religious educator, and a leader.

From the beginning, my ability as a community organizer and a religious educator, as well as a leader were considered worthy of attention by the site team, because of its importance in ministry and the benefit to the community at large. During the process of examining church history of Reformed Traditions, current secondary literature on the subject up to seminars, conferences, and workshops attended, I have discovered and understood how important sound biblical doctrine impacts the call of God upon my life and ministry. Undoubtedly, theological and academic investment at New York Theological Seminary has transformed my journey into pilgrim of hope for marginalized young adults.

Consequently, perhaps my greatest growth in this insightful journey was in my ability to accept theologies, theories, and ideas that are different from what I have thought, as new expressions of God in relating to others, especially young adults have brought insightful discovery of self. Within the context of this project, I was able also to listen to pastors, evangelists, professors, teachers, social workers, etc. describe their own experiences, and it became a lesson and teaching experience for me. Attendance at study groups, seminars, conferences, retreats, workshops, prayer, and church services took a new dimension in my ministry, as I embrace new thinking. This opened a new chapter of academic exploration, which I began to utilize the biblical and theological knowledge that this experience has brought into my life, ministry, and the community as a whole.

APPENDICES

Appendix A
Demonstration Project Proposal

TRANSITIONAL LIVING PROGRAM FOR MARGINALIZED GHANAIAN
YOUNG ADULTS (18-22 YEARS) IN THE DIASPORA

By

Ebenezer Christian Annor

DEMONSTRATION PROJECT PROPOSAL

New York Theological Seminary

November 14, 2016

Challenge Statement

As a Ghanaian Minister of Religion at Trinity Presbyterian Church located in the Bronx and Prayer Watch Temple Ministries International Inc., in Williamstown, Syracuse, I have seen Ghanaian young adults 18-22 years who did not have the stability of safe housing – lack of parental nurturing, supportive/educational care, etc.; culminating in teenage pregnancy, drug addiction, orphans, and college dropouts. Out of concern for these marginalized Ghanaian young adults, this demonstration project will focus on creating a transitional living program for transforming and mentoring them to achieve their life dreams.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION TO THE SETTING

Pastor Ebenezer Annor, hails from the country of Ghana (West Africa), "located

in the middle of the world…. the closest landmass to the actual center, where the equator

and the Greenwich Meridian meet."[1] As the third-born child of 8 children of Mr. & Mrs.

Annor family, I was born into the Presbyterian Church and began my education from

Presbyterian Primary School at the age of 3 years old from 1963 to 1971. As Ronald W.

Richardson explains "family colors our experience of the rest of our life, shaping the way

we tend to perceive ourselves, our relationships, the kinds of decisions we make, and the

ways we make them."[2] Such family colors persuaded me to navigate my academic pursuit

along denominational lens, which underscore the justifications for my beliefs, values, and

way of living. As a result, I relocated to Mid-State of Ghana to continue my High School

education from 1971 to 1974, where I obtained the High School Certificate. After passing

the Entrance Examination, I was admitted to Secondary School in the Mid-State from

1974 to 1979 where I obtained the West African Examination Council General Certificate

(Ordinary Level). I embarked on further studies and later was employed in various

sectors of the Ghanaian economy. While in my teens, I started having the desire to do the

Lord's work and was therefore elected to various positions and services in the Presbyterian

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[1] Kofi Ayim, *The Akan of Ghana: Aspects of Past and Present Practices* (North Charleston, SC: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2015), 1.

[2] Ronald W. Richardson, *Becoming a Healthier Pastor: Family Systems Theory and the Pastor's Own Family* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 37.

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Church of Ghana. In the process of time, in 1986, I felt called into the ministry of the

Word and Sacrament and gained admission at Christian College Seminary and also

obtained Diploma in Biblical Studies at the University of Ghana. After completing my

theological studies in 1989, I was posted to Patasi Presbyterian Church as

pastor/evangelist, in Kumasi, from 1989 to 1996, "seeking simply to offer biblically

based spiritual counsel,"[3] preaching and teaching. I then started planting churches under

the auspices of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (P.C.G.), West Africa. The first

congregation I pastored is Patasi Presbyterian Church, and that became a spring board to

plant additional churches in other parts of Ghana.

As a pastor/evangelist, at the Patasi Presbyterian Church, the Lord opened the

door for me in September of 1996. I left the shores of Ghana, West Africa for the United

States to continue my theological education. On my arrival in the United States, I served

as an associate Pastor with the Manhattan Presbyterian Church, from 1996 to 1998. I

enrolled at the Southern Baptist Seminary in Manhattan to pursue graduate theological

studies but was short-lived because of financial constraints. However, to ensure that the

work of the Lord continued among Ghanaians, and "strive for freedom in every aspect of

their lives,"[4] I gathered a small group of people together in the year 2000 and we started

what has today become known as Trinity Presbyterian Church (PCUSA) in the Bronx, New

York.

Strategically, Trinity Presbyterian Church is located in the faith community of

Third Avenue and East Tremont in the South Bronx, New York, a poor working-class

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[3] David G. Benner, *Strategic Pastoral Counseling: a Short-Term Structured Model*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 13.

[4] Yolanda Y. Smith, *Reclaiming the Spirituals: New Possibilities for African American Christian Education*, Reprint ed. (Cleveland, OH: Wipf & Stock, 2010), 39.

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neighborhood. It is part of the Bronx Community District six. It is a densely populated

urban neighborhood in East Tremont and has a population of over 30,000 residents.

Much of its real estate is primarily made up of small to medium sized apartment

buildings. Many of the buildings were erected not later than 1939 and a few were also put

up between 1970 and 1999. There are big warehouses in the community, which are used

for businesses and religious purposes. There is a mix of occupational and cultural groups

in the community where "children often express their concerns about violence through

repetitive play enactment and through the use of drawings."[5] There is a unique mixture of

Dominicans, Puerto Ricans, Italians, sub-Saharan Africans, White and African

Americans that make up the residents of the community. The majority of the residents

speak Spanish and many also speak African languages at home. This dimension of the

community opened the door for Trinity Presbyterian Church to assume a multi-cultural

congregation, one-third of the church membership being immigrants from West Africa.

Many of the residents have low-income jobs. East Tremont has all kinds of stores that

provide different services to the residents of the community. There are a couple of fast-

food restaurants as well as a few financial institutions, like Chase Bank, Bank of

America, City Bank, etc. in the South Bronx community, etc. Residents work in sales and

service jobs ranging from major sales to fast-food restaurants. The one dominant

employer in the community is St. Barnabas Medical Center, with "a corporate culture, a

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[5] Nancy Boyd-Franklin, *Black Families in Therapy: Understanding the African American Experience*, 2nd ed. (New York: The Guilford Press, 2006), 169.

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cohesion of values, myths, heroes, and symbols that have come to mean a great deal to the people who work there,"[6] as well as the community.

Historically, Trinity Presbyterian Church has been in existence for the past 16 years, and I am the first pastor to serve this congregation of the Reformed Tradition. My Christian vocation in the Reformed tradition has to do with the call of God in my life, which strengthens my belief in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and accordingly, following Jesus in obedient discipleship. It consists of allowing God to use the gifts and abilities He has given me to honor and serve Him in families, the community, and the world at large. Such response to God's call to faith in Jesus Christ involves the Word, the Sacrament, ministries of God's people, honor, worship and serving God in communities of diverse faith, in every aspect of human endeavor. Work and worship cannot be separated, both goes hand-in-hand together; that includes regular Christian education. Yolanda Y. Smith states that "a holistic approach to Christian education requires a threefold vision. It must seek to address the intellectual, social, spiritual, physical and emotional concerns of the congregation."[7] This model of Christian education is designed to address the needs of the whole person. Singing hymns, psalms, other songs, and expressions of giving and sharing bring communal feelings in the service of the Lord's Day. Moreover, this Christian vocation is structured with the traditions of the Reformed Church and is organized and governed according to the Presbyterial order. In other words, this seeks genuine reform in faith and life, and the hope we have in Jesus Christ in word and deed. It values faithful and a deep commitment to ministries of mission with

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[6] Terrence E. Deal and Allan A. Kennedy, *Corporate Cultures: The Rites and Rituals of Corporate Life* (New York: Addison-Wesley, 1982), 4.

[7] Smith, *Reclaiming the Spirituals*, 48.

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certain basic principles such as the nature of church on earth, Jesus Christ as the only

Head of His church, the nature of the church's authority, representative principle,

government by elders, and the equality of the ministry. This affirms the article,

"Introduction to the Setting: Guide to Writing a Congregational Profile," that covers three

(3) broad areas that include the identity of the congregation, the ministerial programs

carried out by the congregation, and the capacities (taped or untapped) for realizing

effective change.[8]

The Presbyterian Reformed Church adheres to the structure and polity of

Presbyterianism. It involves moving from the local level (congregational level),

Presbytery, Synods, and the General Assembly. A structure of government based on

grassroot participation which involves the Session, Elders (ruling elders), the ordained

Pastor (teaching elder) to ensure the growth of the church. This system of grassroot

participation allows the congregants the opportunity to express their views in the

decision-making process of the church in adherence to rules and regulations of the

constitution and the Book of Order as well as the Scriptures (1st Timothy 3). This

structure also works through various committees which help the Session of the local

congregation or the Presbytery, the Synod, or the General Assembly to sustain it.

As pastor of Trinity Presbyterian Church, I lead a diverse congregation (tribal

affiliations) regularly to engage in evangelism, visitation, prayer vigils and worship on

the Lord's Day bringing a sense of emancipatory hope. Evelyn L. Parker writes that

"emancipatory hope means to expect transformation of hegemonic relations of race,

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[8] "Introduction to the Setting: A Guide to Writing a Congregational Profile" (New York: New York Theological Seminary, 2016), 1.

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class, and gender and to act as God's agent ushering in God's vision of human equality."[9]

A vision William James says "bears witness to the soul's emancipation."[10] The Lord has

also blessed the church with 15 seat passenger van, and Cargo truck ("Trinity

Harvesters") to assist in our evangelism and outreach effort in the five boroughs of New

York City. My expectation in ministry is that people will be lovers of Jesus Christ and

Him crucified. The Word and Sacrament is at the heart of the Reformed Tradition. For

that reason, I wish to preach Christ to as many people as possible, with all possible

wisdom, cautioning and teaching them in order to help bring each one to the knowledge

of God so that they will grow and mature into individuals united with Christ (Col. 1:28,

GNT). Above all, I preach regularly, not only in my congregation, other Presbyterian

congregations, but also non-denominational churches in New York City where I am

placed on their preaching roasters. To be a voice to the voiceless and the oppressed in the

community. Theologically, this strengthens the fact that "the identity of any congregation

is ultimately found in God or in Jesus Christ. Such theological identification does not

eradicate the specificity of a congregation's own particular life and ministry, however,

any more than the identification of a particular individual believer with God eradicates

the character or personality of that believer."[11]

My ideal role model for religious/spiritual development is Dr. Wilson Awasu, The

Right. Rev. Frimpong-Manso, and Rev. Dr. Moses Biney, who have been of immense

help in this direction. They are patient and it has helped me in mentorship in diverse

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[9] Evelyn L. Parker, *Trouble Don't Last Always: Emancipatory Hope Among African American Adolescents* (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2003), 6.

[10] William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience: a Study in Human Nature* (Middletown, DE: Seven Treasures Publications, 2009), 50.

[11] "Introduction to the Setting," 3.

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ways. Their counseling abilities, encouragement, helped me to persevere in my pastoral ministerial journey. Always, they are there for me and I can tap into their rich experience as ministers of the Gospel with PC(USA) and professorship.

My strength includes persuading people to succeed and mentoring the young adults. I always like to invest for the success of others, especially, the marginalized in the society, because these are the people "throughout his ministry Jesus continually identified with those on the underside of the Roman Empire – the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, and the naked (Matt 25:40). His teaching of the kingdom tells us a story of an economic order where all people's basic human needs will be cared for."[12] Rev. Dr. Moses Biney and Dr. Wilson Awasu have been the most important persons in helping me to maintain the strength that the Lord has given me and managing my weaknesses. This is because both have been my mentors and spiritual fathers, encouraging and counseling me through the path of my calling into the ministry.

After graduating with Masters of Divinity at New York Theological Seminary in Manhattan, I further pursued *Foundations in Chaplaincy Ministry* course in order to help the disadvantaged in my neighborhood and "be willing to listen carefully without judgment and without personal agenda."[13] Knowing that I "do not hold the key to their redemption . . . and to let them know their lives mean something to us and to others."[14] This took me to the St. Barnabas Hospital where it helped me, not only to achieve good communication skills through interaction with patients at the hospital, but to experience

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[12] Peter Goodwin Heltzel, *Resurrection City: A Theology of Improvisation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012), 57.

[13] Rita Nakashima Brock and Gabriella Lettini, *Soul Repair: Recovering from Moral Injury after War* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2012), 128.

[14] Ibid.

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who I am in the caregiving ministry. My presence in the room of these patients helped a lot and with prayer and the direction of the Holy Spirit, the patients found solace and encouragement through the Word of God and the visitation as well. I have learned to listen without interruptions and understand the hurting better with a compassionate heart as I helped them. As a result, theory and practice have transpired into hospital visitation skills and abilities to provide pastoral presence for the sick, the helpless and the vulnerable. Through this Chaplaincy Ministry, I have been equipped to have the desire for vision, mission and passion for the care giving ministry, in terms of awareness and understanding of illness and health, dying patient, and the grieving family members.

Currently, I am pursuing further studies in the Doctor of Ministry program at New York Theological Seminary, because I believe that there is more room for improvement, in order to help people with the pastoral vision God has put inside of me. The love of God motivates my faith. Our contemporary church concept about God requires more than theological degrees. It requires people with prophetic voices, people who have courage to lead the gospel with love and justice. "And this is precisely what God requires of congregations, to incarnate God's prophetic word of a good future with hope."[15] Nevertheless, most of the time, our various churches are more of a country side club. We allow people we like to come in. The Church has become institutionalized and not care for the lost to the church. For that reason, the Church has excluded people in the name of doctrine, but Jesus says the practice of real Christian love is founded on commitment to help others, irrespective of religious affiliation. The steadfast love of God motivates me to proclaim God as a loving Father in a crisis world that is human. As the Scripture says,

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[15] Parker, *Trouble Don't Last Always*, 9.

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"He [Jesus] *said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets"* (Matthew 22:37-40, NRSV). This is most compelling because it has helped me to explore the mission, passion, and vision of theology constructively in relation to true humanity. God is on the side of people who are suffering, so I have to feel that pain of the suffering, as love motivates my faith to bring smiles on the face of the oppressed and the marginalized in our contemporary society.

In the final analysis, I am being challenged to reflect more on the theological statement my congregation is pursuing in its life, ministry, mission and spiritual practices in relation to the marginalized young adults. In order to do this, I need to draw upon resources that are beyond the life of the congregation itself, and will include the Avery Dulles' four models of church: fellowship, servant, sacrament, and prophetic community.[16] Another resource I can draw upon is the "various Trinitarian models to reflect upon the congregation as being a fellowship in the Spirit, or the body of Christ on earth in this particular place, or a covenant community under the sovereignty of God."[17] Of far more challenge to my project will be the question, can the Protestant principle of prophetic nature of the word or the Catholic principle of concrete nature of the sacrament share light upon my congregation, or Israel's faith that is centered in temple worship of priestly, prophetic, and sagacious religion help me theologically in my congregation today,[18] so as to help these marginalized young adults "reimagine their existence outside

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[16] "Introduction to the Setting," 9.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid., 9-10.

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of their enslaved state."[19] This demands an on-going analysis and consideration to achieve the mission and the vision for the marginalized Ghanaian young adults in the diaspora.

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[19] Heltzel, *Resurrection City*, 15.

CHAPTER 2
PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF THE CHALLENGE STATEMENT

As a Ghanaian Minister of Religion at Trinity Presbyterian Church located in the Bronx and Prayer Watch Temple Ministries International Inc., in Williamstown, Syracuse, I have seen Ghanaian young adults 18-22 years who did not have the stability of safe housing – lack of parental nurturing, supportive/educational care, etc.; culminating in teenage pregnancy, drug addiction, orphans, and college dropouts. Out of concern for these marginalized Ghanaian young adults, this demonstration project will focus on creating a transitional living program for transforming and mentoring them to achieve their life dreams.

In my 20 years of pastoral care in the United States of America, I have been

exposed to the deteriorating lives of the Ghanaian immigrant community in the diaspora,

and this phenomenon is affecting the young generation. My intention to begin a

transitional living program for marginalized Ghanaian young adults in the diaspora is to

serve as platform for mentoring them to achieve their life dreams, so as to break the cycle

of oppression likely to affect the next generation. This motivation stems from the fact that

a lot of the young adults today are involved in crimes, drug and alcohol addiction, gang

related culture, and more importantly, lack of parental nurturing in their various homes,

which have given rise to them being equated with societal vices. For that reason, such

social changes' call for social analysis "comes up strongly as people become convinced

of the importance of a deeper look at our social reality and want to put into practice the

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tool for opening up that reality."[20] Social analysis is "the effort to obtain a more complete

picture of a social situation by exploring its historical and structural relationship."[21]

Young adults who are being abandoned are a generational crisis that is brewing in

our society today. In his analysis, G. Wade Rowatt, Jr. posits that "Adolescence, the

tough and turbulent between childhood and adulthood, holds fascination for children and

adults."[22] Right from childhood, children are given to babysitters to be taken care of as

parents are busy with work and hardly spend quality time with their own children. As a

result, there is a gradual loss of parental relationship with their own children as they grow

into adulthood and feel they are left alone to figure out life on their own.

Many young adults live in a world of their own, divorced of adult participation

and relationship. There is systemic abandonment that has pervaded the Ghanaian culture

in which parents, teachers, counselors, adults, even ministers of religion have ceased as a

community to at times fulfill their commitments to our young adults. As a result of

parents' failure to fulfill their role, young adults have become more vulnerable,

contributing to increasing levels of crisis and what is widely being witnessed in our

society today. Often, some adults believe they know what exactly their children need to

do and will go to the extent of prescribing the best choice for them. This may include

involving their kids in activities as a proof of their commitment to the young, for

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[20] Joe Holland and Peter Henriot, "Social Analysis: Linking Faith and Justice" (New York: New York Theological Seminary, 2016), 95.

[21] Ibid, 98.

[22] G. Wade Rowatt, *Adolescents in Crisis: A Guide for Parents, Teachers, Ministers and Counselors* (Louisville: Westminister John Knox Press, 2001), 1.

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instance, driving their kids to soccer games, concerts, and competitions.[23] However, the child's interest seems to be ignored, because parents are over involved in how well their children are performing in these areas but unfortunately are not so much involved in other aspects of their lives, such as monitoring their personal, spiritual, academic and social lives, thus lacking emotional support when they most need it. In my opinion, we can be over involved in the wrong things, and uninvolved in the right things, both at the same time. Undoubtedly, these young adults lack identity of purpose in life endeavors. Equally enough, instability pervades the social, cultural, religious, etc. spectrum of the American and Western society. A lot of young adults, who are in the gang culture, are insecure, in wrong relationships, angry, confused, and frustrated. Though some of these young adults are in church, it doesn't mean all is well. Some of the best church young adults have been the most vulnerable young adults who are "struggling with significant questions of cultural identity . . . the tensions, contradictions, fears, doubts, hopes and "deferred" dreams that are part and parcel of living a borrowed and colonized cultural existence,"[24] from the yoke of British colonialism, which their parents have passed down to them. Surprisingly, we pursue the ones outside the church. Sustaining these young adults in the faith takes a lot of work because of signs of abandonment that have featured prominently in their lives.

For the past twenty years of ministry, my involvement with young adults has given me enormous experiences as a result of categories of faith practices that these young adults are involved in. Some young adults adhere to the traditional church beliefs.

[23] Chap Clark, *Hurt 2.0: Inside the World of Today's Teenager's* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 30.

[24] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 30th ed. (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2000), 11.

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They are committed to church traditions and want to be in high mass churches as his/her

clear focus on the source of his own faith tradition, has the practical effect of making the

boundaries between the Christian denominations more permeable.[25] In a sense, churches

that have a lot of tradition, authority and faith practices are clearly defined. Their

mainstream faith is quite privatized and is focused on inner piety of being good,

righteous, and holy. Then there is another group of young adults who have lived in homes

where the families have been traditional Christian believers. They are the selective

adherence. This group select which churches are helpful and which ones are not, based on

their own lifestyles and what they believe in. And so, if they want to associate with

others, they want to be more environmentally friendly and have some causes that they

want to fight, therefore they select which church suits what they want to pursue. They

will disagree, neglect, or ignore the official teaching of the church. You can preach

whatever you want to preach from the pulpit, though they will be there at the prayer

meeting, etc. and listen but then they will select the message that suits their desires.

There is also the third group who are spiritually open and effective. "I mean a

creative energetic, committed group of youth who are spiritually, physically, emotionally

and socially directed toward desired and planned goals."[26] They are not personally

committed to one faith or another but are receptive and mildly interested in spiritual

matters. They are more interested in what God means to them, but if you come and

convince them that this faith practice is important for their lifestyle, they will believe it. If

any person comes in and he coherently explains to them why they should follow that

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[25] Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Discipleship*, vol. 4, *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 314.

[26] Robert S. Coombs, *Building an Effective Youth Program: A Tool for Ecumenical Congregations* (Chicago: Community Church Press), vi.

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faith, they are likely to be disciples because they are open-minded about things. They won't hold on to some kind of doctrine they can't understand and "a decision of the heart rather than the intellect is to accept the coexistence of different faiths and to do so not grudgingly but willingly."[27] Then there is this fourth group who are religious indifference. They may claim to be religious but to them it doesn't really matter. They could as well dispense of the church as any other thing and don't "focus on positive role models."[28] Then the fifth group is the religiously disconnected. These are the ones whose upbringing does not expose them to any religious practice. They grew up in homes where religion wasn't anything that was important to the family. These disconnected young adults take a very harsh and opposing view of religion and they get close to atheism and turn to be derogatory and become antagonistic against religion. They are not agnostic, but they take a more antagonistic attitude towards religion. They just hate religious people and anything that has to do with religion. They will even want to go to the extent of destroying religious things. While some believe in a higher power, others don't believe in anything, even the institution called church and its practices. Sometimes some of these youths have a sense of spirituality and they want to by-pass these religious institutions which they see them as hypocritical and want to have a relationship with what they call, higher power, rather than go to church. Some simply don't care about church or any other religion. To some ecclesiastical observers, this could be one of the factors that has led to adolescents or young people not going to church and marginalized.

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[27] David J. Bosch, Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission, 20th ed. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011), 495.

[28] Boyd-Franklin, *Black Families in Therapy*, 32.

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Today, we are so preoccupied with job opportunities and higher educational

pursuits, to the extent that the concept of faith formation and spiritual transformation for

these young adults are absent, let alone nurturing the next generation. The simple

impartation of religious education and lived faith experience is more rooted in the

family's reception of the Christian message. Harold W. Burgess states that "imparting

information is ordinarily considered a necessary aim, though not the ultimate goal, of

religious education."[29] Instead, most parents will pride themselves with success stories of

their kids to the neglect of their spiritual development. These young adults are no more a

priority in their families and the church establishment. In my perspective, these young

adults are not the problem. Though some may argue that most of them are involved in

mal addictive behaviors and other social ills, that they love to be targeted as indicators of

crisis. However, in my opinion, we adults are the problem because "there are many issues

concerning fatherhood that may become secrets in some African American families."[30]

We have created a kind of systemic abandonment of the young adults who have pervaded

the Western and the American culture. This project of habitat for marginalized young

adults in the diaspora is meant to somehow understand this world of young adults. There

is the need for the church leadership to be acquainted with their world and understand

what it feels like to be in their situation. It is not enough to know, but to experience it, so

as to recognize their situation. It is a concept of a "wounded healer" whereby empathy,

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[29] Harold W. Burgess, *Models of Religious Education: Theory and Practice in Historical and Contemporary Perspective* (Nappanee, IN: Warner Press, 2001), 164.

[30] Boyd-Franklin, *Black Families in Therapy*, 70.

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sympathy and interpathy becomes the walking stick into their world, filled "with the pressures of an oppressive society."[31]

When we look at the Christian faith tradition as a central resource from which we draw on to do our outreach program, we see the notion of being attuned right to the hurt of humanity in general and the hurt of young adults in particular, as it traces throughout scripture with the words of the writer of Hebrews 4:15, which says *"For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin."* In a sense, we are wounded healers, that even in the Christ's figure Himself there is symbiotic relationship being played out between humanity and divinity, where the divine figure incarnated to be so near, to touch the feelings of yearning families as well as the hurt of the young adults and the poor in the society. Because we ourselves have been touched in some way, we can offer comfort that we ourselves have received. It is an experiential anatomy of knowing how you feel and how you can feel for the young adults. Thus, a theology of presence inviting the marginalized young adults to embrace the love of Christ. Is not a ministry of having a kind of salvic power to save them, but viewed "in terms of the incarnate Christ, the human Jesus of Nazareth who wearily trod the dusty roads of Palestine where he took compassion on those who were marginalized."[32] He is also the wounded healer who today sides with the young adults who suffer in the Ghanaian community of America and their alcoholic

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[31] Ibid., 8.

[32] Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 524.

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parents whose addiction breeds willfulness within them, yet, eroding their freewill and eating away at their dignity. Nevertheless, grace is where their hope lies.[33]

My personal regret which has become a working experience for me is a sense of arrogance that I employed into the youth ministry 25 years ago when I was a youth minister, with the notion that I can rescue these troubled Ghanaian young adults without recognizing their embattled situation. I realized that when you are uninformed, you are deformed; when you are informed, you will be reformed; and the day you will discover, you will recover. Indeed, my insightful recovery has brought a sense of brokenness to help these adolescents in the diaspora. Unless we the adults and the church leadership recognize the hurt in our own lives and tell our story to these confused Ghanaian young adults, we can't deal with the hurt in the life of these wonderful young adults who are future generational legacy. It is on this note that the challenge statement is inviting me and my Site Team to begin a journey of discovery and recovery for a sustainable future for these Ghanaian young adults' liberation and transformation.

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[33] Gerald G. May, *Addiction and Grace: Love and Spirituality in the Healing of Addictions* (New York: HarperCollins, 1998), 4.

CHAPTER 3
PLAN OF IMPLEMENTATION

Goal, Strategies, and Evaluation

Goal 1: To bring awareness to the Ghanaian immigrant churches, the clergy, the
community leaders, and the parents with young adults age 18-22 years in
Trinity Presbyterian Church in the Bronx Community and Ghanaians in the
diaspora, to the effect that the church is losing the young adults to its future
development and there is a generational gap between the first and second
generation. Moreover, address the prevailing issues of neglect, abandonment,
waywardness, and the need to acquire the necessary skills to mentor these
Ghanaian young adults through an educational curriculum, so as to improve
their living standards and effectively transform them for a lifetime.

- **Strategy 1:** Pastoral visitations to family homes, as well as
preach sermon series on youth neglect and transformation. (Ebenezer
Annor will do this in March 2017).

- **Strategy 2:** Pastoral care of the parents and young adults,
personal appearances in churches and the community to identify the
problem and the solution, as to how to fill the generational gap and
move them into a leadership position of the church. (Ebenezer Annor
will do this in March 2017).

- **Strategy 3:** Speaking at community events, open discussions and
forums dealing with youth challenges and the need for parents to
understand, listen and encourage them. (The Site Team and I will do
this in March 2017).

Evaluation of Goal 1: 75% of participants of the Ghanaian immigrant churches, the
clergy, the community leaders and the parents with young adults, age 18-22

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years, in attendance will determine the successful implementation of the pre and post questionnaires to participants present.

Goal 2:   Recruit and build a team of 6-8 people with specialties such as architectural and project designers to formulate a strategic plan for studying and analyzing the transitional living program to suit the needs and future aspirations of these marginalized Ghanaian young adults.

- **Strategy 1:** Mobilize architects, contractors, financial sponsors, project designers, and building inspectors to develop the criteria for the program. (Ebenezer Annor and Site Team will do this in April 2017).

- **Strategy 2:**   Hold meetings with the team of architects, contractors, financial sponsors, project designers, and building inspectors. (Site Team will do this in April 2017).

- **Strategy 3:**   In concert with the team find a suitable transitional living structural environment and build a hundred percent success project for these marginalized Ghanaian young adults, age 18-22 years. (Site Team and I will do this in April 2017).

Evaluation of Goal 2: Recruit of 60-75% of architects, contractors, financial sponsors, project designers, and building inspectors, as well as myself, will help to create and develop the best transitional living program for the young adults.

Goal 3: The Site Team and I will develop and utilize the technology and services of those sought in Goal 2, as we ensure the process of implementation of a viable transitional living program for the sustainable development of these young adults age 18-22 years.

- **Strategy 1:**   Team will create transitional living structures for these marginalized Ghanaian young adults age 18-22 years. (Site Team, young adults, parents, community leaders, and I will do this in 2017).

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- **Strategy 2:** Develop and implement health and wellness programs such as drug abuse counseling, detoxification program, mentorship program, spiritual formation, and recreational facilities, for these marginalized Ghanaian young adults age 18-22 years. (Site Team and I will do this in 2017).

Evaluation of Goal 3: Utilize about 80% both Human and spiritual resources capable of creating and implementing a successful transitional living program for the transformation and mentorship of these marginalized Ghanaian young adults age 18-22 years.

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CHAPTER 4
RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Historical

Historically, how has the first-generation Ghanaian immigrants' parenthood
created marginalization for the second-generation Ghanaian young adults, its effects on
their adulthood and how to rehabilitate/resettle these marginalized young adults, age 18-
22 years, for effective developments towards a sustainable future?

This question is of the utmost importance for the Ghanaian immigrants' churches,
the clergy, and community leaders, to gain understanding of how parental involvement
has not been effective in rehabilitating/resetting young adults. This will enable Ghanaian
immigrant leadership to pinpoint deterioration situation that is leaving the deepest mark
on the generation of these disadvantaged young adults and their life aspirations.

Theological/Biblical

How can these Ghanaian young adults age 18-22 years find liberation in Exile,
according to 1 Peter 1:1-2 and 1 Peter 2:11, so that they will not find themselves in
oppressive struggle?

This question will essentially enable the Ghanaian immigrant church, the clergy,
community leaders, the parents, young adults between age 18-22 years, to understand and
address prevailing issues of neglect, abandonment in this challenging time of economic
recovery, so as to acquire the necessary skills and mentor these new wave of young adults
in an educational curriculum. This will improve the living standards and effectively

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transform these marginalized Ghanaian young adults, certainly, that will stay with them for a lifetime.

Socio-Economic

What is the socio-economic cost of resettling and equipping Ghanaian young adults for a holistic life endeavor, towards a dream legacy?

Undoubtedly, this question will aid the immigrant Ghanaian churches, the clergy, parents, community leaders, to assess the sources of financial resources to do what is available for these 18-22 years marginalized young adults in such a transitional living program for education and transformation. Of far more interest to the future aspirations of these young adults is also the implied cost of not solving this menace. Consequently, this can result in social delinquency such as increase crime, gang culture, drug abuse, sexual promiscuity, and substantial decrease in graduation rates, bringing with it burden on the tax payer in the community, and eventually, devaluing their American Dream for a better future.

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CHAPTER 5
EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluation process of my Demonstration Project begins with a format composition of myself, experience evaluator and the Site Team, to effectively ensure the success of the project. My focus will be on resettlement, drug rehabilitation, educational development, mentorship, and nurturing holistic nurture of young adults through the following methodology.

METHOD OF EVALUATION I – CHURCH/COMMUNITY AND YOUNG ADULTS CONFERENCE

Focus will be on interactions with young adults, with the view to do a critical assessment of their lives from the perspective of neglect, abandonment, and rejection by parents, with the intention of giving specific steps to accomplish their long-term vision.

Church and community leaders will be required to observe and view the dilemma of these marginalized young adults in their midst, as a means of getting involved in areas of their transformation and growth process. Young adults, church and community leadership will be granted in-depth interviews, undertake surveys, as well as embark on seminars and programs not only to bring awareness, but to facilitate the development of stated goals and strategies toward the needed transformation.

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METHOD OF EVALUATION II – CANDITATE, SITE TEAM AND PARENTS CONSULTATIONS

Candidate, Site Team, and youth leaders will use goals and strategies of my demonstration project to hold consultative meeting with the young adults 18-22 years, to determine the program viability, direction and provide the necessary feedback of program from the adolescents; strengths/weaknesses for its success story.

Questionnaires and evaluations will be made available to parents, community members, observers, and teachers to help identify significant findings that may be overlooked, reveal the inadequacies of the project and if possibly recommend new ideas that are needed for successful education and implementation. Adolescents will be encouraged to design visual aids/arts that define their area of giftings that bring effectiveness, as well as worth of diversity in their lives, community, and the world.

METHOD OF EVALUATION III – UTILIZATION OF SURVEYS AND INFORMATION COMPILED.

My Site Team and I, as well as church and community leaders will utilize information gathered by devising educational curriculum program that will describe in detail adolescents' rehabilitation needs, reflect their areas of deficiencies, issues/problems and effectively implement the program for its success. There will also be comprehensive follow-ups by team members to the participants of this program, so as to offer links to the Ghanaian immigrant community in the Diaspora, as well as to achieve the desired goals.

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CHAPTER 6
MINISTERIAL COMPETENCIES

The Process

The members of the Site Team were informed and given a copy of the Ministerial

Competencies, which enabled them to assist me in a detailed analysis of the competencies

that are based on knowledge of my gifts, talents, abilities and skills, and the proposed

project. They spent time and energy in joining me in the process of competency

assessment. The Site Team members involved were Dr. Dinah Mensah (Bronx, NY),

member of Prayer Watch Temple Ministries Incorporated will serve as the leader of the

Site Team; Mrs. Henrietta Nana Adwoa Mensah (Bronx, NY), Leadership member of

Prayer Watch Temple Ministries; Dr. Richard Brew (Bronx, NY), member of Trinity

Presbyterian Church; Mr. Felix Ofori (Bronx, NY), member of Prayer Watch Temple

Ministries; Miss. Mariama Torto (Bronx, NY), elder of Trinity Presbyterian Church.

On April 7, 2016, I informed the Site Team members of the assessment process.

Dr. Dinah Mensah agreed to hand out, collect, and summarize the assessments.

On April 23, 2016, the Site Team met and brought all their assessments in my

absence to go over the responses gathered by Dr. Mensah. I was therefore called into the

meeting and responses were shared with me.

A summary of the Site Team's and my assessments of ministerial competencies

assessments are as follows:

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The Assessments

As Theologian – Rev. Annor understands the doctrines of the church, historical development, and working knowledge of secular disciplines like psychology, sociology economics and political science, as well as the ability to relate the Word to the setting in which his congregation lives. Rev. Annor recognizes ethical implications of particular problems and moves to an ethically justifiable posture to bring solutions and enables his congregation to work through the process of ethical decision-making. Because of Rev. Annor's rich diversity of perspectives and skills in relating the Word of God in an appropriate setting, we see more cultures attending worship services. *Candidate has the desire to continue to grow theologically and maintain professional vitality.*

As Preacher – Rev. Annor has a strong ability to interpret sacred scriptures in a meaningful and effective manner, has good and appropriate use of language and effective delivery, and organizes material effectively, as well as excellent address of contemporary concerns and needs effectively to the congregants with well-informed and knowledgeable Christ-centered materials. Congregants have and continue to be empowered by candidates' effective delivery of the scriptures, and his articulation in Bible study materials have helped other denomination Bible studies teachers how to have graduate from his mentorship, and retreat programs, and also youth and children ministries being equipped to develop skills. *Candidate feels the need to continue empowering and facilitating the growth of his congregation to grow spiritually and in other critical areas in their lives.*

As Worship Leader – Rev. Annor has the ability to frame worship appropriately within the sacred calendar and make worship come alive for the congregation. He is able to create and lead rituals and forms of worship for specific occasions or situations. As a

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worship leader, Rev. Annor is skilled and well-grounded in the understanding and meaning of the sacraments of the community and its traditions, and helps worshippers move purposefully through the liturgy experience. Above all, he is skilled in interpreting reading of sacred scripture. *Candidate wants to create a more grounded environment for both young adults and adults to enjoy and experience Spirit-filled worship service.*

As Change Agent – He not only communicates to others a passion for justice to inspire change, but also active and involved in implementing specific strategies and discern the ethical implications to the transformation of the community, congregation, and the world. Rev. Annor is sensitive and empathizes with victims of social injustice, embraces the risk, and involves others in the process of seeking social change, to create group ownership and build coalitions, now and for future generations. *Candidate feels the need to continue in this to create a better habitat for the new wave generation.*

As Ecumenist – Rev. Annor reaches out to other denomination's faith traditions to learn, be challenged, knowledgeable and appreciate other denominational religious traditions. He is very willing and able to foster a dialogue and understanding across denominational lines and informs the congregation of the needs, concerns and community involvement of other denominations, congregations, and groups. *Candidate wants to learn more about providing structured opportunities for interdenominational and/or multicultural worship, education, or action.*

As Leader – Rev. Annor is willing to learn from, both young and adults, respects talents, delegates responsibility and shows appreciation for a job well done. He is willing to share knowledge and resources, give constructive criticism effectively, and takes initiative when appropriate. Rev. Annor has consistent ability to follow through on plans

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and supports and to follow-up on the initiatives of others to bring transformation. *Candidate feels the need to continue to create an environment in which the gifts of the Spirit may flourish within the congregation.*

As Religious Educator – He has sound teaching methods appropriate to one's hearers, open to dialogue, prepares and communicates strongly, he involves, trains, and supervises other educational leaders. He has clarity and organization of thought and understands the learning process across the continuum of human life, as well as, sensitivity to the appropriateness of learning at each stage of development – childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. He is strong in communicating religious concepts and challenges appropriate to different age groups, therefore, analyzing the needs of individuals, organizations, congregation, and communities and to develop appropriate educational strategies or responses for success. *Candidate feels the need to continue to create and have the courage to prompt individuals, congregations, and communities to ask questions and work toward healing, reconciliation, and justice, so as to attain personal growth in the gifts of the Spirit, which in turn overflow into the life of the community.*

As Counselor – Rev. Annor is a very open, honest, genuine, and free individual, who is approachable and self-accepting and growing person. He is very skilled in relating and communicating and able to help others to sustain, endure, and work through difficulties/crisis in healing and restoring to wholeness. For this reason, he is able to guide others and walk along them through their inner journey and to be an agent of reconciliation in re-establishing broken relationships between self and others, self and God, and couples/siblings/friends. Although he is knowledgeable in regard to human

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psychological development, he is able to recognize the limits on his own competency as a counselor to make appropriate referrals when necessary. *Candidate wants to continue to establish creative relationships that can help others become more whole.*

  As Pastor/Shepherd – Rev. Annor is a model of a servant-leader. He understands and practices "soul-care" and self-care for his congregation and others in the community. He welcomes, encourages, and involves newcomers, cherishes, and nurtures long-time members and comforts those who are bereaved. He visits those who are ill, whether in the hospital or at home. *Candidate wants his caring servant-leader ability and also to develop the ability to seek contact with inactive members.*

  As Spiritual Leader – Rev. Annor sets an example in his own observance of spiritual disciplines, including the ability to observe Sabbath rest, such as regular time of retreat for spiritual refreshment and renewal. He seeks to grow in the knowledge of the spiritual practices of other times and traditions by attending regular spiritual disciplines appropriate for his own traditions. He is an effective leader in spiritual retreats, meetings, and services. As he is attentive to the spiritual journey of the on-going relationship with God of both one's self and those in one's pastoral care, he is able to guide others in their ongoing relationship with God. *Candidate feels the need to continue to be grounded in spiritual disciplines and regularly exercise personal spiritual practices.*

  As Administrator – He is very proficient and effective in making use of personal and material resources of the congregation. He is able to identify resources and involves others in the decision-making process. While he is able to define and identify goals, he is also able to establish goals that are achieved and encourages achievements by

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communicating a sense of mission and vision. *Candidate feels the need to continue administrative skills.*

As Professional Skills – Rev. Annor is open, a good listener, communicator, and personable in his relationship with others. He has a positive attitude and extremely enthusiastic about challenges and tasks he undertakes. He is able to deal constructively with conflicts, issues, and day-to-day relationships. *Candidate should not only find time to physically rest, but also limit his workload within the time available, so as to gain strength to continue in his skills.*

This process was helpful, and I am grateful for the Site Team allowing the Spirit to speak to me through them.

Competencies Chosen for Development

I. **As a COMMUNITY ORGANIZER:** I will build bridges of partnerships and coalition with members and leaders in the community. This will have the potentiality of building a broad spectrum of opinion on imaginative issues (such as educational reforms) among these community leaders, as a means in contributing to the community's unique gifts, talents, and resources strategically, to the broader movement of justice and peace in the community. Undoubtedly, it will unite us with a common ground to nurture diversity by honoring diverse voices, negotiate/settle basic differences of opinion and embrace cumulative accountability that inspires reflection and action.

Strategies:

    A. I will understudy and be trained by a community organizer.

    B. I will research, study books, and investigate community organizations' activities and achievements.

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C. I will attend Seminars, conferences, and programs on Community Organizing while volunteering to participate in their outreach programs.

Evaluation:

A. The success/achievement will be determined by about 75% of the above goals and strategies that will equip me with the practical knowledge gained in Community Organizing training. This will help me to better develop and initiate comprehensible viable project, in concert with the parents, grassroot organizations, academic institutions purposely designed to rehabilitate and transform marginalized young adults.

II. **As a LEADER:** The humble willingness to listen and practice what I learn from others, so as to share such knowledge and resources to the faithful brethren. With the aim to organizing talents, gifts, abilities, under your domain to effectively empower, support and follow up on ministerial capabilities to achieve fruitful and maximum results. Nevertheless, creating a leadership environment in which the gifts of the Spirit may flourish, and redefine my voice of compassion to liberate the second generation marginalized young adults to imagination.

Strategies:

A. I will seek not only enrolling in or attending leadership seminars/courses, but also on the job leadership training, in order to mentor a whole generation of youth and taking chances on them.

B. I will involve myself with veteran Spirit-filled leaders, practically who will share and impact me with their experiential knowledge on youth leadership in my quest to be mentored as a transformative leader.

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C. I will interact and visit youth centers of rehabilitation to be informed and discover the practical realities of what the concept of young adults' neglect and transformation entails.

D. I have to employ the nuggets of positive leadership which include motivation, determination, integrity, self-confidence, sociability, problem-solving, and intelligence, to create a team work that inspires a possible vision for people of diverse background who are led to see the future and help them develop it.

Evaluation:

A. To achieve these goals of competency is to practically experiment the truth with my life and work, as I learn from others. Further, the willingness to compassionately listen and respond to concerns, needs/problems of others will help me to assess about 80% of job well-done, and ability to delegate responsibility to capable people.

III. **As a RELIGIOUS EDUCATOR:** I will need to develop a more active systematic approach and strategy to Christian education that will help me to discover new resources within me, others, and society. Also, to initiate, develop creativity, consciousness that will prompt others in asking new questions to enable them to work toward healing, reconciliation, and justice. This will bridge the gap between practical and theory through a variety of approaches, so that what I have learned for effective training and teaching in the church, youth camps, seminar/conferences will bring personal growth in the gifts of the Spirit and enlightenment, which in turn overflow into the life of the larger community.

Strategies:

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A. Get formal training in understanding adolescent crisis to help develop or build up their sense of worth by having their feelings and experiences validated that will recognize their great worth to God who dwells within them.

B. I will continue to study the scriptures and counseling techniques to improve skills to help young adults deal with challenges in all areas of their lives, and to gain a diversity of perspectives.

C. I will establish deliberate programs, i.e. "Music Bazaar" to create space for religious meaning and alternative music for these young adults, and not leave the church.

D. Through continued teaching of the Word of God and mentorship, I will help young adults to relate to the Word and use past experiences and goals for their future to transform present behavior.

Evaluation:

A. As a result of forging meaning in relation to theology, counseling and mentorship, which find expression through incarnational teaching as passion for caring, growth process of about 75% of educational strategies or response will be achieved, paving the way for openness to dialogue with others.

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APPENDICES

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Appendix A
Timeline/Budget

Date	Task/Activity	Tools Necessary to Complete task	Person Responsible	Budgetary Considerations /Cost	Source of Funding
2/2017	Obtain Project Proposal Approval	Project Proposal	Ebenezer Annor & Site Team		
2/2017	Meet various Church denominations, Organizations, and Leaders of the community to request grants / funds to support Demonstration Project.	Demonstration Project Proposal. Develop PowerPoint presentation for task	Ebenezer Annor	$5,000.00 to $10,000.00 (Total Funds expected)	Various Church denominations, Organizations, and Leaders.
2/2017	Meet with Pastors and the community to ask permission to hold a talk to bring awareness by sharing my project.	PowerPoint presentation.	Ebenezer Annor	$100.00 (Travelling expenses)	Funds
2/2017	Recruit 6-8 young adults age 18-22 years.		Ebenezer Annor and Site Team	None	
2/2017	Organize a training session for members to discuss the project.	Demonstration Project Proposal	Ebenezer Annor		
2/2017	Meet with Advisor to share progress of Project and Funds attained and to gain input for next step.	Copy of Demonstration Project	Ebenezer Annor	None	
2/2017	Meet with Site Team members to designate assignments / tasks.	Conference Hall	Ebenezer Annor	$100.00	Funds
3/2017	Meet with the selected young adults age 18-22 years to discuss ways to develop a meaningful habitation program.	A conference hall	Ebenezer Annor	$200.00	
3/2017	Continue research		Ebenezer Annor	$250.00 for books,	Funds

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	on demonstration project.		& Site Team	articles, journals, etc.	
3/2017	Meet with clergy, community leaders, teachers, educators to discuss plans for the project	Demonstration Project Proposal	Ebenezer Annor		
3/2017	Begin consultative program and input with young adults age 18-22 years.		Ebenezer Annor and Team of actors		
3/2017	Meet Site Team and Advisor to update progress of tasks / activities.	Conference hall	Ebenezer Annor & Site Team	$200.00	Funds
3/2017	Visit churches, community and Ministries to acquire time to exhibit project to parents and young adults.		Ebenezer Annor	$200.00 (Transportation)	Site Team
4/2017	Continue to meet with selected young adults age 18-22 years.	A conference hall	Ebenezer Annor	$200.00	
4/2017	Meet Site Team Members	Assign task and share progress	Ebenezer Annor	$100.00	
4/2017	Continue conducting research at the Library on Demonstration Project.	Documents, research file, computer	Ebenezer Annor	$50.00 for copies, etc.	Site Team
4/2017	Meet with Advisor to share and update progress of project and activities.	Office	Ebenezer Annor	$100.00 for travelling expenses	Site Team
4/2017	Meet with editor to share project and give timeline for submitting research writing.	Office	Ebenezer Annor		Site Team
5/2017	Continue to meet with selected young adults age 18-22 years and parents.	A conference hall	Ebenezer Annor	$200.00	
5/2017	Begin to write proposal	Journals, Books, and Bibliography	Ebenezer Annor	$100.00	Funds
5/2017	Presentation of Project through proposal and awareness ad to parents in the church and community.	Project Notes / PowerPoint and skit/play/ad.	Ebenezer Annor		

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June 2017	Reflection and writing time	Journals, Books, and Bibliography	Ebenezer Annor	None	Site Team
6/2017	Sample music bazaar, sporting events, youth seminars and conferences for young adults age 18-22 years.	Young adults age 18-22 years	Ebenezer and Site Team Members	$1000.00 (Estimation)	Funds
7/2017	Host a Seminar for parents from the churches and communities to share more detail about the purpose of the Project.			$500.00	
7/2017	Meet with Site Team and Advisor for updates.			$200.00	
7/2017	Continue writing, editing and hosting seminars to communicate project for more parental awareness.				
2018	Advisor Fee		Ebenezer Annor	$750.00	Funds
2018	Site Team Appreciation		Ebenezer Annor	$1000.00 ($200.00 each)	Funds

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Appendix B
Questionnaire

<u>New York Theological Seminary Doctor of Ministry Dissertation Project</u>

VENUE: Trinity Presbyterian Church

DATE: Saturday, February 4, 2017

TIME: 4-5pm (1 hour)

PARTICIPANTS PRESENTS: Eleven (11) young adults participated with Site Team members

The purpose of this research is to create a living transitional intervention program for marginalized young adults age 18-22 years at Prayer Watch Temple Ministries and the Ghanaian community in the diaspora. I am also trying to create logic models and outcomes as well as curriculum design program that will provide opportunities for the overall transformation of marginalized young adults for their productive transition to adulthood.

<u>QUESTIONS</u>:

1. What are the specific needs and opportunities that young adults think can successfully transition them into successful adulthood?

2. How can the process of program interventions provide the needed resources inputs, such as tools and skills to empower the young adults assume adult roles and responsibilities for a fruitful future?

3. How do young adults see the importance of curriculum structure and leadership development program to enhance their knowledge about the ability to manage their own learning and capacity to lead people?

4. What effective strategies can be employed for this intervention program process help young adults achieve significantly higher motivation, a higher self-esteem, more innovation, and increased creativity towards higher standard of living?

5. What young adults' outcomes are most likely to be influenced by program intervention strategies to materialize in order to help young adults achieve the desired result for a better future?

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